Manglona: Dismissal of case vs IPI inappropriate. PAGE 3
Kilili: Decline in number of US, FAS workers 'disappointing' PAGE 4

Hafa Adai!

$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXII, Issue No. 32

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Victim had no safety gear on

AT A GLANCE

As of 5:33pm, Feb. 14, 2022

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population Additional Dose Vaccinated: 54.4%

Days since last community transmission: 2

Pfizer/BioNTech	
Initiated:	37,882
Fully Vaccinated:	36,843
Moderna	
Initiated:	5,326
Fully Vaccinated:	5,173
Janssen	
Fully vaccinated:	1,133

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	39,985	295	40,280
Recovered	31,906	2,894	34,800
Active	4,878	295	5,173
Deaths	306	1	307

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	7,353	177	7,530
Recovered	5,286	261	5,547
Active	2,044	84	1,960
Deaths	23	0	23

Source: Joint Information Center – Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The man who was found lifeless on the side of Middle Road in Gualo Rai over the weekend was not wearing the proper safety gear required by CNMI law while riding a bicycle.

Saipan Tribune learned from a credible source that the man who was found unresponsive along Chalan Pale Arnold had no helmet on, no safety light attached to his bike or his body, and was not wearing a bright shirt as required by CNMI law. In addition, the area where the collision took place is known to be poorly lit because of the lack

See VICTIM on Page 4

8 hospitalized; 1 on ventilator

» 177 new cases

Soon after fully vaccinating 100.1% of the CNMI's eligible population and with the CNMI revamping its COVID-19 protocols, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. is changing how it provides updates on the CNMI's pandemic situation by shifting its focus to hospitalization counts instead of the number of new cases.

The changes are also reflected in the vaccinatecnmi.com dashboard, which has replaced the full vaccination

See 8 on Page 4

MONEY ON THE TABLE:

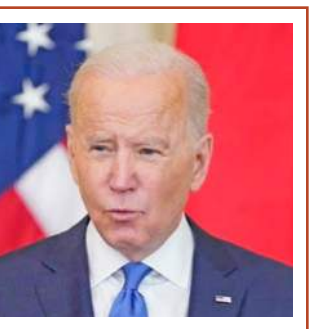
Child credit available via tax returns

By JOSH BOAK
ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Biden administration wants families with children to know that there is roughly $193 billion waiting for them—all they need to do is file their taxes to claim it.

That estimated total is what remains of the expanded child tax credit, and the administration is concerned that some of those most in need of the assistance may be the least likely to get what is due to them.

See CHILD on Page 4

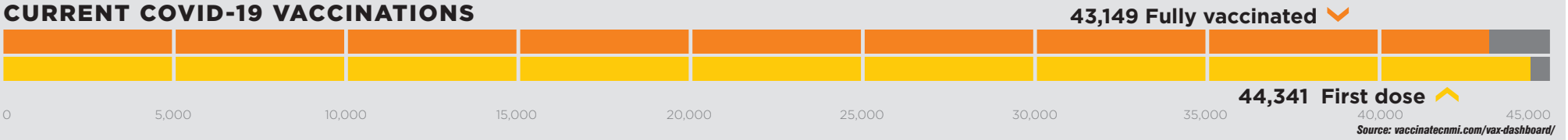


President Joe Biden speaks in the East Room of the White House, Monday, Feb. 7, 2022, in Washington. AP

LIGHTING INSTALLATION CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Photos show the basketball court lighting installation at the Commissioner Joaquin S. Tudela Community Park to restore lighting for the basketball players of San Vicente and the neighboring areas. This project is a collaboration between the CNMI Office of the Governor, Office of Grants Management, House of Representatives minority leader Rep. Angel Demapan (R-Saipan), and Precinct 1 minority Reps. Lee Pan Guerrero (R-Saipan), Roy Ada (R-Saipan), and Joseph Flores (R-Saipan).

CURRENT COVID-19 VACCINATIONS



Source: vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

INSIDE

BUSINESS
After decades of decline, U.S. unions have a new reason for hope: younger workers.
Page 11

NATION
The United States is increasingly outspoken about its concerns that Russia will invade Ukraine.
Page 12

ASIA
A Pakistan mob stoned to death a middle-aged man for allegedly desecrating the Quran.
Page 13

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Local

CNMI tops list of highest number of COVID cases in the US

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI has surpassed Guam and is currently at the top of the list of highest daily COVID-19 cases per population in the entire United States.

During a COVID-19 protocol forum last Friday, Dr. Lily Muldoon, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. emergency physician and Public Health medical director, informed CNMI government officials and private partners that, as of last Friday, the CNMI has made it to the top of the list of highest COVID-19 cases per population of 100,000 across the nation.

According to the chart that the CHCC medical director presented, the CNMI surpassed Guam last Friday with a daily case average of 210.

"Despite having a relatively low daily case average, per 100,000 people, that puts the CNMI at NO. 1. We have surpassed Guam as having the highest case load per population in the entire nation," she said.

Muldoon said, however, that it comes as no surprise as the CNMI tends to lag behind the entire nation in terms of COVID-19 trends.

KIMBERLY BAUTISTA

Dr. Lily Muldoon, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. emergency physician and Public Health medical director, speaks during a COVID-19 protocol forum last Friday at the Kensington Hotel Saipan.

She further assured that based on data from the rest of the United States, the CNMI will soon experience a decline in cases in the following weeks.

» Muldoon: The CNMI will soon experience a decline in cases

"This wasn't surprising to me. We could see this coming because again, we're a little bit delayed. All of the other states listed here have peaked and they are now on the downtrend. If we look at the 14-day average, over time, the entire U.S. is experiencing a decline in their cases and that's what's going to happen here," she said.

Although the CNMI is currently in the middle of an omicron surge, Muldoon assures that once the CNMI has peaked, "we will see a steady decline" like the rest of the nation.

"Here in the CNMI, we're continuing to have an increase and we expect in the next couple of weeks, we should start to see a decline in our case load," Muldoon said.

In the meantime, Muldoon encourages the community to do their part to ensure that the surge is contained to prevent overwhelming the healthcare system.

This means living COVID-19 safe, getting vaccinated and completing vaccinations, staying home when you're feeling sick, getting tested when you experience COVID-19 symptoms, and seeking treatment when symptoms are severe.

"Omicron data suggests that omicron is less severe but it can still cause hospitalization. Because it is more contagious, if the spread is not contained, the CNMI risks overwhelming its healthcare system. We want to protect and not overwhelm our healthcare system," she said.

To date, there are eight individuals hospitalized as a result of COVID-19.

For those experiencing severe symptoms of COVID-19, Muldoon encourages them to visit the COVID-19 treatment sites located next to the Koblerville basketball court, or the MCATS tent located at CHCC.

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Saipan Tribune
Finance chief's authority to reprogram funds is renewed. PAGE 2
Man accused of strangling another over marijuana pipe
NMTech beefs up online learning capacity, student website
saipantribune.com
Go further with every fill
Mobil
Synergy
TAGA plus
CAMPING ON MANAGAHA
NORTHERN MARIANAS PACIFIC MINI GAMES 2022
JUNE 17- 25, 2022
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING Public School System teachers collaborate during an activity at one of the recent training seminars conducted by the Northern Marianas College's Community Development Institute and PSS to improve the knowledge and skills of educators needed to address students' learning challenges. (NMC)
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Manglona: Dismissal of case vs IPI inappropriate

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Although Pacific Rim Land Development LLC's has already asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to dismiss its recent case against Imperial Pacific international (CNMI) LLC, doing so would be "inappropriate" pursuant to federal rule of civil procedure, said Chief Judge Ramona Manglona.

Manglona

According to Manglona's order, Pacific Rim made a motion in court last week, asking it to dismiss its recent case against IPI with prejudice, meaning it cannot be filed again.

Upon review of the motion, Manglona said she found that the dismissal, under federal rule of civil procedure 41, is inappropriate and thus denied Pacific Rim's motion for dismissal without prejudice. Manglona allowed Pacific Rim to file an amended motion by Feb. 18.

"If the intent of Pacific Rim was to have its two sole remaining claims—breach of the construction contract and unjust enrichment—dismissed, a Rule 15 amendment is the appropriate mechanism," Manglona said.

The judge explained that Rule 41 allows for the voluntary dismissal of an action by a plaintiff without a court order by filing a notice of dismissal before an answer or motion for summary judgment is filed, or (ii) a stipulation of dismissal signed by all parties. Otherwise, Rule 41 states that a court may dismiss an action at a plaintiff's request on terms it considers proper.

In this case, however, the court found that dismissal of the entire action against IPI is inappropriate because one of Pacific Rim's claims has already been decided and judgment was entered and affirmed.

She explained that on April 23, 2020, the court entered a decision and order granting Pacific Rim's motion for partial summary judgment on its breach of the promissory note claim. An amended judgment was entered in favor of Pacific Rim on May 28, 2020, in the amount of $6,909,333.43 for that claim.

On Oct. 19, 2021, the 9th Circuit affirmed the court's decision and order granting partial summary judgment in favor of Pacific Rim.

Kiki's is latest ProaPerks partner

Kiki's, a women's clothing store in Gualo Rai, is the latest company to sign on as a Northern Marianas College ProaPerks Partner, joining many other businesses and organizations that provide discounts to NMC alumni, students, and employees.

All card-carrying members of the NMC ProaPerks program can now receive a 5% discount on clothing and shoes at Kiki's.

Kiki's joins the growing list of ProaPerks partners that are taking advantage of the purchasing power of thousands of NMC students, employees, and alumni.

NMC is in the introductory phase of rolling out the ProaPerks to alumni, students, and employees. For more information, visit marianas.edu/proaperks.

Companies and other interested organizations who would like to become part of the ProaPerks prograkm can find more information by emailing proaperks@marianas.edu. ***(PR)***

NMC

Kiki's is now a proud NMC ProaPerks partner. More information about their special promotion for ProaPerks card holders can be found at marianas.edu/proaperks.

DONATION TO KARIDAT CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jesse Torres, principal broker of Paradise Realty Saipan, presents a check donation to Lauri Ogumoro, executive director of Karidat Social Services. Torres said in a social media post that Paradise Realty Saipan is a proud supporter of Karidat.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Public warned of high surf, rip currents

The public is being warned that hazardous surf of 8 to 10 feet is expected along north facing reefs and beaches. The risk of rip currents will be high along north and east facing reefs of Guam, Rota, Tinian, and Saipan.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Guam and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center's State Warning Point, a high surf advisory remains in effect until 7am today, Tuesday, while a high risk of rip currents is present through Tuesday morning along north and east facing reefs of Guam, Rota, Tinian, and Saipan.

This will create dangerous swimming and surfing conditions. Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water.

The public is advised to avoid venturing out toward north and east facing reefs. Elsewhere, swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

6.2-magnitude quake south of Guam

At 6:29am on Feb. 14, 2022, a report of a 6.2-magnitude earthquake occurred 176 kilometers south of Merizo Village in Guam. Currently, no tsunami warnings or advisories were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000. ***(PR)***

4.7-magnitude quake south of Guam

At 08:09am on Feb. 14 2022, a report of a 4.7-magnitude earthquake occurred at 11.807°N 144.376°E 164 kilometers south of Merizo, Guam. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories that were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000. ***(PR)***

Free PTAC webinars in February

The Guam Procurement Technical Assistance Center is offering free live webinars this month. Webinars run from 10am to 11:30am and will be conducted via Zoom. Links to the live webinar and the webinar evaluation will be emailed to all registered attendees 15 minutes before the start of the webinar.

■ Feb. 17 - Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment - Department of Defense vendors use the Wide-Area Workflow module in the Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment system to create, submit, and track their invoices. We will show you how to setup an account and submit an invoice so you get paid on time.

■ Feb. 24 - Federal Contracting Responsibilities - Department of Defense vendors need to protect themselves from cyber attacks. We will discuss DOD's current requirements as well as the upcoming Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC 2.0).

To register, visit: www.guamptac.com. ***(PR)***

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Chief Accountant – JMC-2022-01, Saipan, CNMI

CHIEF ACCOUNTANT,
Joeten Motor Company, Inc., Saipan, CNMI

Consolidate and Prepares company monthly departmental Financial Statements inconformity with general accepted accounting principle (GAAP) acceptable to United States, prepare company budget and monitoring budget versus actual expenses. Performs General Ledger posting, reconciliation, prepare balance sheet schedule on a monthly basis, such as preparation of Fixed assets lapsing schedule, pre-payments, accruals of expenses. Review and compiles Financial Statements for various individual and corporate clients in conformity with auditors requirements. Review and in-charge in the calculation of CNMI and federal government taxes on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis, Responds to CNMI Revenue and IRS letters and prepares necessary documents needed to correct and comply tax filing. In-charge in the cost accounting, accountable for the ongoing analysis of process constraints, target costing projects, margin analysis, and tracing costs back to underlying activities. The cost accountant must also construct and monitor those cost-effective data accumulation systems needed to provide an appropriate level of costing information to management. Coordinate physical inventory counts and cycle counts, Investigate cycle counting variances and resolve issues, Update standard costs in the bill of materials, Review standard and actual costs for inaccuracies, Validate the cost of goods sold as part of the month-end close, Accumulate and apply overhead costs as required by generally accepted accounting principles, Work with the materials review board to locate and dispose of obsolete inventory. Conduct ongoing process constraint analyses, Report on breakeven points by products, work centers, and factories, Report on margins by product and division, Report on periodic variances and their causes, focusing in particular on spending variances, Analyze capital budgeting requests, Perform cost accumulation tasks as a member of the target costing group. Prepares recommendations to the top management, with regards to meeting company budget, cost cutting measures, and help in the implementation of company set policies.

Minimum Requirements: Bachelor's degree in Accounting, Finance, or related field, foreign educational equivalent accepted, plus 2 years experience in general accounting functions and 2 yrs experience in managerial position. Able to supervise accounting and administrative staff. Knowledge in preparing Consolidated Financial Statement in conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principle (GAAP). Knowledge in local, state and federal tax preparation. Good oral and communication skills. Good interpersonal qualities.

Salary: $ 18.50 per hour.

Workplace: BEACH ROAD SAN JOSE VILLAGE, JOETEN MOTORS BUILDING Saipan, CNMI

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Kilili: Decline in number of US, FAS workers 'disappointing'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) has expressed disappointment with the decline in the number of U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals, and Freely Associated States citizens working in the Marianas, as shown in a recent U.S. Government Accountability Office study.

The Freely Associated States refer to the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

In his e-kilili newsletter over the weekend, Sablan said that, according to GAO's biannual report on workforce trends that was published last week, there were 13,662 "U.S. workers" in 2016 and that same group shrank to 12,106 in 2020.

» Delegate notes employers paid over $15M to CNMI gov't to train US workers

The GAO report is mandated by the U.S. Workforce Act, U.S. Public Law 115-218, to track if the law's goal "to encourage the hiring of U.S. workers" is being met.

The delegate said the GAO report results are disappointing, given that Marianas employers have paid over $15 million for the CNMI government to train U.S. workers.

Sablan said another goal of the law was to increase the percentage of U.S. workers in the Marianas economy.

From 2016 through 2020, that percentage did go up, from 47% to 51%, he said, because, even though the number of U.S. workers decreased in that period, the total workforce shrank even faster.

Sablan

"So. the statistical ratio improved at the same time fewer U.S. workers had jobs," the delegate said.

Sablan said another statistical oddity is that the CNMI government changed its tax reporting procedures in 2018 for individuals given CNMI-only permanent resident status under his Long-Term Legal Residents Relief Act, U.S. Public Law 116-24, thus "shifting workers previously counted as foreign workers to United States workers," according to GAO. Sablan said this gave the false appearance that the number of U.S. workers was growing.

The GAO study also shows that the number of foreign workers in the CNMI fell by 73% from 2001 to 2020. GAO found that the overall number and share of foreign workers in the CNMI workforce fell significantly over the last 20 years, from about 36,000 workers in 2001, to about 9,700 workers in 2020, representing about a 73% decline.

Torres mum on choice of lead counsel in impeachment trial

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres is keeping close to his chest his choice of who will be his lead counsel in his Senate impeachment proceedings/trial.

Torres

In response to a question during Friday's radio press briefing about his plan for the Senate proceedings, Torres declined to disclose at this time whether his lead counsel will be the Washington, D.C.-based law firm or the local law firm of David G. Banes. The governor, however, stated he will inform the media later about this.

Torres hired Washington, D.C.-based lawyer Ross Garber of Garber Group LLC to represent him in the House of Representatives Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee's investigation into his expenditures of public funds and travels. He also retained the Banes Horey Berman & Miller law firm to help the Office of the Governor with the JGO's investigations. Gilbert Birnbrich also appeared during some JGO hearings and meetings as counsel for the Office of the Governor.

Last Feb. 3, Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) requested the co-chairs of the two Senate committees that he assigned to review the impeachment resolution to come up with impeachment rules within 14 days.

The full House impeached Torres for alleged commission of felonies, corruption, and neglect of duty. The governor has denied the allegations.

Meanwhile, at the same press briefing Friday, Torres said they are still looking as to who will be the NMI Republican Party's candidate that will challenge Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan's (Ind-MP) re-election bid.

Torres said they are also looking as to who will be the GOP's candidates for available positions in the Nov. 8 general election.

Up to $3K grants available for UOG students in need

University of Guam students who demonstrate financial need can get up to $3,000 through the UOG Cares Emergency Grant. This is the second and final round of the grant program, which is designed for students who demonstrate exceptional financial need.

"We created this grant because we are committed to finding ways to make college more affordable for our students," said Anita Borja Enriquez, senior vice president and provost at the university.

Applications will be accepted until 5pm on Friday, Feb. 25, 2022, or until all funds have been awarded.

To apply for the UOG Cares Emergency Grant and for more information, visit: https://url.uog.edu/caresgrant2022.

For questions, email: heerf@triton.uog.edu. ***(UOG)***

CHILD

From Page 1

President Joe Biden increased the payments and expanded who was eligible as part of his coronavirus relief package. While most families already received half of the credit as monthly payments last year, they'll lose out on the remaining balance unless they file their taxes.

Vice President Kamala Harris, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and White House senior adviser Gene Sperling held a virtual event Tuesday to encourage people to send their tax forms to the IRS, including those whose incomes are so low that they might not have traditionally filed.

Harris said that families should go to childtaxcredit.gov to check their eligibility. The tax filing deadline is April 18.

"The truth is there are people across our nation who work hard every day and still struggle to get by and it should not be this way in our country," Harris said. "You still need to file your taxes. That is the only way to receive the second half of what you are owed."

The public push is occurring at a critical juncture for both the U.S. economy and the child tax credit program. Inflation is running at a nearly 40-year high, meaning that the additional money from the credit will help offset the costs of food, gasoline and other goods as the U.S. is still emerging from the pandemic. But efforts to renew the expanded credits for another year have been blocked in the Senate, making it important for advocates to demonstrate how the credits have reduced child poverty by an estimated 40%.

Yellen said research suggests that the payments are among the most promising policies for combating poverty, highlighting recent research to suggest that the money was linked to higher brain activity in the babies of poor mothers.

"There is very little equivocation that these policies lift up the lives of millions of people, and, in so doing, lift up the country," Yellen said.

Several lawmakers and nonprofits are taking part in the outreach, and there are plans to hold events in all 50 states and Puerto Rico during the tax filing season. Yellen noted that nonprofits are often better at reaching out to poorer populations.

As part of the $1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package, Biden increased the child tax credits to $3,600 annually for each child aged 5 or under and $3,000 for those who are ages 6 to 17. The government began to send the payments out on a monthly basis starting last July, meaning that there are six months worth of payments waiting to be claimed by people filing their taxes.

The administration estimates that roughly 58 million households would qualify for the credit, which average $3,300 and could be used to offset an existing tax bill or be paid out as a refund.

Workers without children could also get additional help this tax season if they file. The relief package nearly tripled the earned income tax credit for workers without dependent children, meaning that 17 million people could receive credits worth $1,500.

The expanded child tax credits were seen as slashing child poverty to the lowest levels on record. A recent analysis by researchers at Washington University in St. Louis and Appalachian State University found no evidence that the monthly payments caused parents to stop working. But critics say that making the credits larger and fully refundable—which ensures that poorer families qualify for the entire benefit—leads to fewer people taking jobs that pay and creates a drag on the economy.

Biden pushed to continue the expanded child tax for another year as part of his "Build Back Better" agenda. But in an evenly split Senate, West Virginia Democrat Joe Manchin opposed the expanded credit out of concerns that its price tag could increase the deficit and worsen inflation.

VICTIM

From Page 1

of street lights.

The identity of the man, a 67-year-old Bangladeshi male, is being kept confidential for now out of respect for the grieving family and because the Department of Public Safety is still investigating the incident.

DPS also clarified that the incident was not a hit-and-run despite what witnesses told *Saipan Tribune*.

According to an official DPS report, DPS responded to a report about an auto-pedestrian crash along Pale Arnold Road, Chalan Lau Lan at around 8:36pm last Saturday.

At the scene, police noticed a bicycle lying on its side in the middle of the road with items scattered all over the lanes and a silver SUV with moderate damage stopped at the shoulder of the road.

Medics arrived on the scene and transported the bicycle operator to the Commonwealth Health Center where Dr. Lily Muldoon pronounced the victim dead at 8:58pm.

"This case is under further investigation at this time. The department asks that the public be mindful of the family during this time," the report stated.

Individuals driving along Middle Road last Saturday took to social media to share what they saw in an effort to spread awareness about the incident.

There have also been photos circulating on social media of an unidentified man lying lifeless just a few feet away from his bike along Middle Road.

According to an eyewitness, while driving along Middle Road last Saturday, she noticed the man just lying there and he looked "dead." Motorists drove around where his bike was seen lying on the road.

An individual who lived near where the incident happened told *Saipan Tribune* that they believe it was a hit-and-run because while passing by, they did not see any car parked nearby to assist the man, prompting them to call 911 for assistance.

Other individuals shared that traffic along Middle Road just past McDonald's was terrible that night because all four lanes were closed for over an hour.

8

From Page 1

target with a new counter on booster shots administered in the CNMI. As of yesterday, that number stood at 20,313 or 54.4%, with a target of 37,309.

According to the CHCC report late Monday night, as of Feb. 13, 2022, there were eight individuals hospitalized as a result of COVID-19. Of that number, two are unvaccinated and six are vaccinated. One of the eight patients is on a ventilator.

Also, 177 additional individuals have been confirmed positive for COVID-19, bringing the CNMI total to 7,530 cases since March 26, 2020. Of the 177 cases identified in the community on Feb. 12, a total of seven were identified on Tinian and two on Rota. The vaccination statuses of the 177 cases are pending verification.

Of the total cases identified in the CNMI, there have already been 5,547 recoveries; 1,960 active cases; and 23 COVID-19-related deaths.

A total of 6,913 were identified via community testing, while 617 were identified via travel testing.

A total of 591 COVID-19 tests were conducted on Feb. 12: 259 via Community-Based Testing; 302 at the Koblerville COVID-19 Community Center; and 30 at the Rota Health Center.

In Guam, the Joint Information Center was notified that the territory's 307th COVID-19-related fatality was pronounced dead on arrival at the U.S. Naval Hospital Guam on Feb. 11, 2022. The patient was a 78-year-old male, vaccinated, with underlying health conditions who tested positive on Feb. 11.

"While our individual efforts have not gone unnoticed, we remain in the firm grip of this pandemic. To his family and those who loved him, [First gentleman] Jeff [Cook], [Lt. Gov.] Josh [Tenorio], and I extend our deepest sympathies and condolences," said Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero in the JIC statement. "It is not enough to only wash our hands, watch our distance, and wear our mask but we must also continue vaccinations and booster shots. For those with sick and vulnerable family members, there are a variety of treatments available to help those with the virus get better faster. We can and we will resurface from these hard times but only with the collective efforts of our entire community."

This comes as Guam reported 295 new cases and 70 hospitalized patients. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

CAT- Palau maintains a longstanding partnership for over 50 years

Members from the Civic Action Team- Palau return home last Jan. 17, 2022. U.S. AIR FORCE/TECH. SGT. ESTEBAN ESQUIVEL

Members of the Civic Action Team- Palau help build a structure in Palau. COURTESY PHOTO

COURTESY PHOTO
The Civic Action Team- Palau stand in front of their camp for a photo.

Members of the Civic Action Team- Palau stand with locals during a basketball tournament. COURTESY PHOTO

By HELENA OWENS
36TH WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Civic Action Team-Palau recently returned to Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, following a six-month deployment to the Republic of Palau, where they helped the local community rebuild structures and roads, train locals, and strengthen regional partnerships.

The CAT is a tri-service deployment to Palau that has been running for over 50 years. The team is from the 36th Civil Engineering Squadron and they have six main objectives; Community Construction Projects, Community Relations Projects, Monument Maintenance, Apprenticeship Program, Medical Care and Camp Maintenance.

"We do everything from renovating churches, participating or hosting projects for the local community, up-keeping historical monuments, providing free medical care and much more," said U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Gerald Mora, the officer in charge of the CAT assigned to the 36 CES. "We are here to embed with the community and provide support to honor our commitment to Palau that was established decades ago."

The CAT-Palau completed over 7,000 hours of training for the locals, over 1,000 hours of community construction, maintained a fleet of 28 vehicles, and much more.

"We completed six construction projects that took over 10 working days to complete," said Mora. "We had 56 technical assists, which are projects that take less than 10 man-days to complete and we've seen and treated over 900 patients for medical treatment."

The CAT-Palau also held community events with the locals, which included a Halloween carnival, a Christmas parade, a basketball tournament and more.

"Improving the community meant everything to the CAT," said Mora. "Being able to provide free assistance and putting on massive free events like a haunted house meant everything for the locals. Seeing locals appreciate your presence and welcoming you into their community is an amazingly unique experience."

Although the CAT-Palau's time has come to an end for this rotation, they have left their mark on the Republic of Palau. Being able to train the locals so they can sustain and manage on their own was a big part of their mission there. Mora attested to this being a mission success when the locals helped him and his team out.

"We had our heavy equipment stuck up north with no way of getting it back to camp," said Mora. "However, a local who was an apprentice years ago caught notice and pulled our equipment back to camp for maintenance free of charge. This really highlighted the lasting impressions the CAT has on the community, and it was awesome to see the locals give back so willingly."

A job well-done by the CAT-Palau.

"Everyone worked very hard, and I couldn't imagine a better team," said Mora.

CNMI DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
RFP NO.: ITB22-BECQR-42200068

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 03, 2022 TIME: 09:00 A.M.

"OFFICE SPACE RENTAL FOR THE BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL & COASTAL QUALITY– ROTA BRANCH"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT THE HORIGUCHI BLDG. GROUND FLOOR, 123 KOPPA DI ORU & BEACH ROAD, GARAPAN SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

****FOR YOUR SAFETY & OURS: ALL INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS ARE REQUIRED TO USE A FACE MASK & ARE REQUIRED TO REGISTER UPON ENTRY****

THE LESSOR MUST COMPLY WITH CNMI PUBLIC LAW 15-23. ARTICLE 5, SECTION 8652 (A-D)

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ELI D. CABRERA
ADMINISTRATOR, BECQ

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
PO BOX 501055, SAIPAN MP 96950
PHONE: (1-670) 237-6500/1 • FAX: (1-670) 234-5962
E-MAIL ADDRESS: CPA.ADMIN@PTICOM.COM WEBSITE: HTTPS: WWW.CNMIPORTS.COM

Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport
"Car Rental Concessions"
CPA-RFP-008-21
Request for Proposals
for: CPA Concession No. CRR-2021-01

The Commonwealth Ports Authority ("CPA" or "Authority") is soliciting proposals for the award of one (1) concession granting the privilege to provide motor vehicle rental services to the traveling public (including the provision of insurance related to motor vehicles rented in the operation of such motor vehicle rental services) at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport ("Car Rental Concession"). The successful proposer will be expected to provide motor vehicle rental services in accordance with its concession and concession agreement at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport for a period of about two years (contract ends on 5/31/2024) upon entering into a concession agreement with the Authority.

The date of issuance of CPA-RFP-008-21 is **January 13, 2022**, and it can be obtained at the issuing office: CPA Administration Office, Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950, Second floor of Arrival terminal at the Saipan International Airport.

Proposals must be addressed to Commonwealth Ports Authority, Attn: Car Rental Concessions Evaluation Committee, CPA Administration Office, Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950; and submitted to and received by the CPA Administration Office (second floor of arrival terminal at the Saipan International Airport) **by or before 4:00 p.m. on February 23, 2022**, at which time the proposal period shall expire. Proposals must be accompanied with a non-refundable administrative fee of $100.00 (certified cashier's checks made out to Commonwealth Ports Authority) to defray the costs associated with handling and considering the proposal. Proposals are not required to include a prepaid minimum concession fee.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to cancel this RFP and to reject any and all proposals in accordance with its Concession Regulations (NMIAC Chapter 40-70).

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
PO BOX 501055, SAIPAN MP 96950
PHONE: (1-670) 237-6500/1 • FAX: (1-670) 234-5962
E-MAIL ADDRESS: CPA.ADMIN@PTICOM.COM WEBSITE: HTTPS: WWW.CNMIPORTS.COM

Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport
"Car Rental Concession"
CPA-RFP-007-21
Request for Proposals
for: CPA Concession No. CRS-2021-01

The Commonwealth Ports Authority ("CPA" or "Authority") is soliciting proposals for the award of one (1) concession granting the privilege to provide motor vehicle rental services to the traveling public (including the provision of insurance related to motor vehicles rented in the operation of such motor vehicle rental services) at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport ("Car Rental Concession"). The successful proposer will be expected to provide motor vehicle rental services in accordance with its concession and concession agreement at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport for a period of approximately two years (contract to end on 5/31/2024) upon entering into a concession agreement with the Authority.

The date of issuance of CPA-RFP-007-21 is **January 13, 2022**, and it can be obtained at the issuing office: CPA Administration Office, Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950, Second floor of Arrival terminal at the Saipan International Airport.

Proposals must be addressed to Commonwealth Ports Authority, Attn: Car Rental Concessions Evaluation Committee, CPA Administration Office, Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950; and submitted to and received by the CPA Administration Office (second floor of arrival terminal at the Saipan International Airport) **by or before 4:00 p.m. on February 23, 2022,** at which time the proposal period shall expire. Proposals must be accompanied with a non-refundable administrative fee of $100.00 (certified cashier's checks made out to Commonwealth Ports Authority) to defray the costs associated with handling and considering the proposal. Proposals are not required to include a prepaid minimum concession fee.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to cancel this RFP and to reject any and all proposals in accordance with its Concession Regulations (NMIAC Chapter 40-70).

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

CNMI DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
RFP NO.: ITB22-BECQT-42200069

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 03, 2022 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"OFFICE SPACE RENTAL FOR THE BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL & COASTAL QUALITY – TINIAN BRANCH"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT THE HORIGUCHI BLDG. GROUND FLOOR, 123 KOPPA DI ORU & BEACH ROAD, GARAPAN SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

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THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

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/S/ ELI D. CABRERA
ADMINISTRATOR, BECQ

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-22-010

PROVISION OF OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE, AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR THE POWER PLANT AND DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM ON THE ISLAND OF TINIAN

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the provision of operations, maintenance, and management services for the Power Plant and Distribution System on the Island of Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of **$200.00** (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-IFB-22-010*, Operations, Maintenance, and Management Services for The Power Plant and Distribution System on the island of Tinian" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on February 22, 2022** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before submission deadline. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Co`de (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid or supply under the contract. The IFB does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the bid under this request, or to procure or contract for goods. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on February 1, 2022**, to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Marcela Tenorio at marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org, and Christie Sablan at christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in the said bids, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids submitted shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 22-051

Opening Date: February 11, 2022
Closing Date: February 25, 2022

POSITION TITLE:	**Trades Assistant, Operator**
DEPARTMENT:	**Power Generation Division**
LOCATION:	**Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA**
ANNUAL SALARY:	**$16,742.00 - $22,602.00 per annum, Non - Exempt**
CONTRACT:	**Not Contracted**
POSITION(S):	**Three (3)**

The incumbent will be under the direct supervision of the Power Generation Manager or his/her designee.

Duties:
- The Trades Assistant-Operator assists with the safe and efficient operation of all plant equipment and machinery including, but not limited to, incinerators, generators, operation of valves, plant production operations, and unloading of diesel fuel tank trucks to storage tanks.
- Follows all safety and operations procedures during operations and maintenance activities;
- Monitoring Plant systems as assigned;
- Prepares job site for work including gathering and setting up materials and supplies, and setting work safety barriers for protection;
- Gathers, cleans and returns equipment, materials and supplies used;
- Cleans and maintains work site after project or repair work is complete;
- Monitors equipment; takes readings and collects data; documents equipment readings; prepares and submits data and work reports;
- Performs inventory spot checks to ensure adequate materials and supplies are available for daily work activities;
- Assisting with equipment inspections, cleaning, corrosion control, and painting;
- Operating incinerators; oil and water separator pump, servicing and preparing oil filters;
- Maintaining grounds, trimming trees and removing debris and housekeeping;
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:
Education: High School Diploma or GED or ABE Program AS. Training and knowledge in operations repair, and maintenance of power generating and/or industrial equipment/facilities desired but not required.
Knowledge of: Customer service principles; Basic mathematical concepts; Safety procedures and safe work practices; Modern office technology.
Skills in: Operating heavy and light equipment machinery, hand and power tools required of assigned area; Adhering to safety procedures and safe work practices; Prioritizing tasks and managing time for efficiency; Identifying issues and solving problems; Providing attention to detail; Taking equipment readings and recording data; Maintaining activity logs and reports; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction. Must Able to lift and carry heavy objects of 45 pounds and over, climb ladders, reach above the shoulders, stand, sit, crawl and kneel for prolonged periods and perform repeated bending. Recognize color codes, operate cranes and motor vehicles. Work inside around machinery in operation; in varying degree of temperature in tight or cramped (confined) work spaces, at heights, on ladders or scaffolds, and on slippery or uneven walking surfaces in close proximity to high and low voltage circuits and climbs stairs frequently. Occasionally use solvents, de-greasing agents, or other chemical agents, and be assigned to protracted or irregular hours of work. Work in environments exposed to dust, oil, grease, constant or excessive noise, vibration, and smoke and gas fumes. Work closely with others and/or alone depending on assigned daily activities.

- **Licensing:**
  o Valid CNMI Driver's License with appropriate class.

Must be available to work a 24/7 rotation shift to include weekends and holidays, may be on call for emergency response.
All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: Submit a completed CUC Employment Application, resume, and applicable supporting documents to the CUC Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, from Monday to Friday (Except Legal Holidays), 7:30 am – 4:30 pm. Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota may submit their documents to their respective CUC Administration office. Application, resume and supporting documents can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org

P. O. Box 501220, Third Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-4282 • Fax: (670) 235-5131
CUC is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

Guam approves Pacific declaration to prevent marine plastic pollution

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

This screengrab shows University of Guam president Thomas W. Krise, top left, joining other Pacific Island representatives virtually at the 30th Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme's Meeting of Officials in September. The meeting resulted in a regional declaration to prevent marine litter and plastic pollution.

Guam has become one of eight countries and territories with Pacific interests to endorse a "Pacific Regional Declaration on the Prevention of Marine Litter and Plastic Pollution and Its Impacts." The declaration was endorsed by University of Guam president Thomas W. Krise as Guam's representative in the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

The declaration will support a resolution on plastic pollution spearheaded by the governments of Rwanda and Peru that calls for a global and legally binding agreement addressing the life cycle of plastics. The resolution will be presented at the Fifth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, taking place Feb. 28 to March 2 in Nairobi, Kenya. The UNEA brings together representatives of the 193 member-states of the United Nations to agree on policies to address the world's most pressing environmental challenges.

The declaration states: "We, representatives of the people of the Pacific region and stewards of the world's largest ocean [...] are deeply concerned about the impacts of plastics and microplastics pollution on our region and that the current patchwork of international legal instruments is not sufficient to prevent the acceleration of these impacts."

The document notes a global disregard for end-of-life management of plastic products, insufficient support for the development of plastic alternatives, and continued production of harmful plastics, especially single-use plastics. Its endorsees share a concern that the annual production of virgin plastics of 368 million metric tons is set to double by 2040, with only 9% of all plastics ever produced having been recycled.

"Despite some progress at national and regional levels, the marine litter and plastic pollution crisis requires a dedicated and coordinated global and regional governance response with the support of all states and other institutional global and regional stakeholders," the declaration states.

Krise reported about Guam's specific challenges and efforts regarding plastic pollution at the 30th Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme's Meeting of Officials in September.

"Along the coasts of Guam, ocean pollution mainly results from illegal dumping and littering on land. Despite having a landfill and reliable trash pick-up services, the cost of waste management and lack of awareness of the effects of pollution are the main reasons for these harmful activities," Krise said.

Other endorsers of the declaration include Australia, France, New Zealand, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, the United Kingdom, and Wallis and Futuna. ***(PR)***

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

NOTICE is hereby given that **ARCTIC CIRCLE AIR SERVICES, INC.,** a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands corporation (the "Corporation"), was dissolved effective as of August 30, 2021. All persons with claims against the Corporation must present their claims in writing to the following address:

Arctic Circle Air Services, Inc.
P.O. BOX 938, Rota, MP 96951

The written claim must include 1) claimant's full legal name and contact information (address, email, and phone number), and 2) the date, description, nature and amount of the claim. Pursuant to 4 CMC § 4607, a claim against the Corporation will be barred unless a proceeding to enforce the claim against the Corporation is commenced within five (5) years after the publication date of this notice.

Community Guidance certifies 25 more in Mental Health First Aid

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Staff from the Northern Marianas Technical Institute and students enrolled in the Northern Marianas College Nursing Program attend the Adult MHFA training on Jan. 13.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Staff of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Non-Communicable Disease Bureau, Community Guidance Center's Behavioral Health Response Program, and Joeten-Kiyu Public Library attend the Adult MHFA training on Jan. 20.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Staff from Public School System Head Start Program, Tinian Jr./ Sr. High School, and Youth Affairs Office attend the Youth MHFA training on Jan. 12.

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Community Guidance Center's Healthy Transitions and System of Care Programs completed three MHFA trainings in January: Youth MHFA on Jan. 12, and Adult MHFA on Jan. 13 and 20.

In partnership with Joeten-Kiyu Public Library and the CNMI Public School System, CGC began 2022 certifying six people in Youth MHFA and 19 people in Adult MHFA during the month of January.

Participants included staff from PSS Head Start Program, Tinian Jr. Sr. High School, Youth Affairs Office, Northern Marianas Technical Institute, CHCC Non-Communicable Disease Bureau, CGC Behavioral Health Response Program, Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, and students enrolled in the Northern Marianas College Nursing Program.

These trainings are all part of CGC's continued plan and implement Mental Health First Aid trainings for 2022.

CGC concluded 2021 by certifying a total of 180 individuals in MHFA: 107 in the Youth MHFA curriculum and 73 in the Adult MHFA curriculum.

MHFA is an evidence-based, early intervention program designed to teach people how to identify, understand and respond to someone who might be struggling with a mental health or substance use challenge—and connect them with appropriate support and resources when necessary.

The blended learning delivery mode requires participants to complete a two-hour, self-paced online course, and a five- to six-hour, in-person, instructor-led class. Participants at the end of the training gain confidence in providing initial support to others through a non-linear five-step action step referred to as ALGEE: Assess for risk of suicide or harm, Listen non-judgmentally, Give reassurance and information, Encourage appropriate professional help, and Encourage self-help and other support strategies.

For more information on MHFA, visit https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org. For contact infoarmation and to request for CGC's MHFA training, visit https://chcc.gov.mp/communitysupport-training.php or call (670) 323-6560/61. ***(PR)***

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

MVA IS HIRING!!!

JVA #	VACANT POSITION	OPENING DATE 2/1/2022	CLOSING DATE 2/15/2022
JVA#22-008:	SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE MANAGING DIRECTOR (SAIPAN)		
JVA#22-007:	PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT MANAGER (SAIPAN)		
JVA#22-006:	MARKETING SPECIALIST I (SAIPAN)		
JVA#22-005:	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES MANAGER (SAIPAN)		
LOCATION:	MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY		

INTERESTED PERSONS MAY CONTACT THE MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY OFFICE AT (670) 664-3200/01 OR VISIT WWW.MYMARIANAS.COM FOR MORE DETAILS.

Joey P. San Nicolas
Attorney-at-Law
San Nicolas Law Office, LLC
2nd Floor, Island Commercial Center, Rm. 203
Chalan Pale Arnold, Gualo Rai
P.O. Box 10,001 PMB 602, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7659 | Fax: (670) 234-9218
Email: jpsn@sannicolaslaw.net

Attorney for Executrix Marilyn Lagrazon Mendiola

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: THOMAS MASGA MENDIOLA, Decedent. : Civil Action No.: 21-0140-CV : **NOTICE OF HEARING**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the petition of Marilyn Lagrazon Mendiola for the decree of final distribution will be heard before the Honorable Joseph N. Camacho, Associate Judge, on the 24th day of February, 2022, at 10:00 a.m., at Room 220, Superior Court of the Northern Mariana Islands, Susupe Village, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All persons interested are hereby notified to appear at the hearing and show cause, if any, why the order should not be made.

Dated this 24th day of January, 2022.

Hon. JOSEPH N. CAMACHO
Associate Judge

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

NMHC JVA NO.	Positions:	Salary:	Opening Date	Closing Date
2022-002	CDBG-DR Internal Auditor (1-Position) RE-ANNOUNCEMENT	UNGRADED $50,000.00-$65,000.00 per annum	Jan. 17, 2022	Feb. 16, 2022 4:00 PM

Employment application form, detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information may be accessed at www.nmhcgov.net.

Applicants may submit their applications through the following options: Submission at the at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan; Drop Box located in front of the NMHC Central Office building; CDBG-DR office located on the 3rd floor of the Ladera Building, Chalan Laulau, Beach Road; or email application and documents to officemanager@nmhcgov.net.

All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre-employment drug screening.

It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670)234-6866/9447or by email to officemanager@nmhcgov.net . NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: DPW22-ITB NO.: 42200064

SUBMISSION DATE: March 15, 2022 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"Kagman Pathway Lightings, Saipan"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

The project package will be available on or after **February 08, 2022** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan.

A non-refundable payment of **One Hundred Dollars ($100.00**) is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at DPW Technical Services Division required for each set.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **February 24, 2022**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center Office, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **March 10, 2022** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ JAMES A. ADA
SECRETARY, DPW

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR,
DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Trump scorned presidential records act. National Archives came to Florida and said: Nah!

The National Archives recently had to retrieve 15 boxes of presidential records from former President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago property in Palm Beach and now has asked the Justice Department to investigate Trump's handling of White House records, The Washington Post reported.

The 15 boxes included correspondence with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, former President Barack Obama's letter to him and that infamous "Sharpie" map about the track of Hurricane Dorian, among other items, some of the information potentially classified. Trump advisers told The Post that there was no "nefarious intent."

A simple mix-up, in other words. Well, of course. From the same president who routinely tore up official documents, despite the Presidential Records Act, which requires the preservation of a president's memos, letters, notes and other communication to be stored at the archives as historical records.

From the same president who, according to New York Times reporter Maggie Haberman's forthcoming book, "Confidence Man," was the occupant of the White House when staff members repeatedly found paper clogging toilets, leading them to believe Trump was flushing documents.

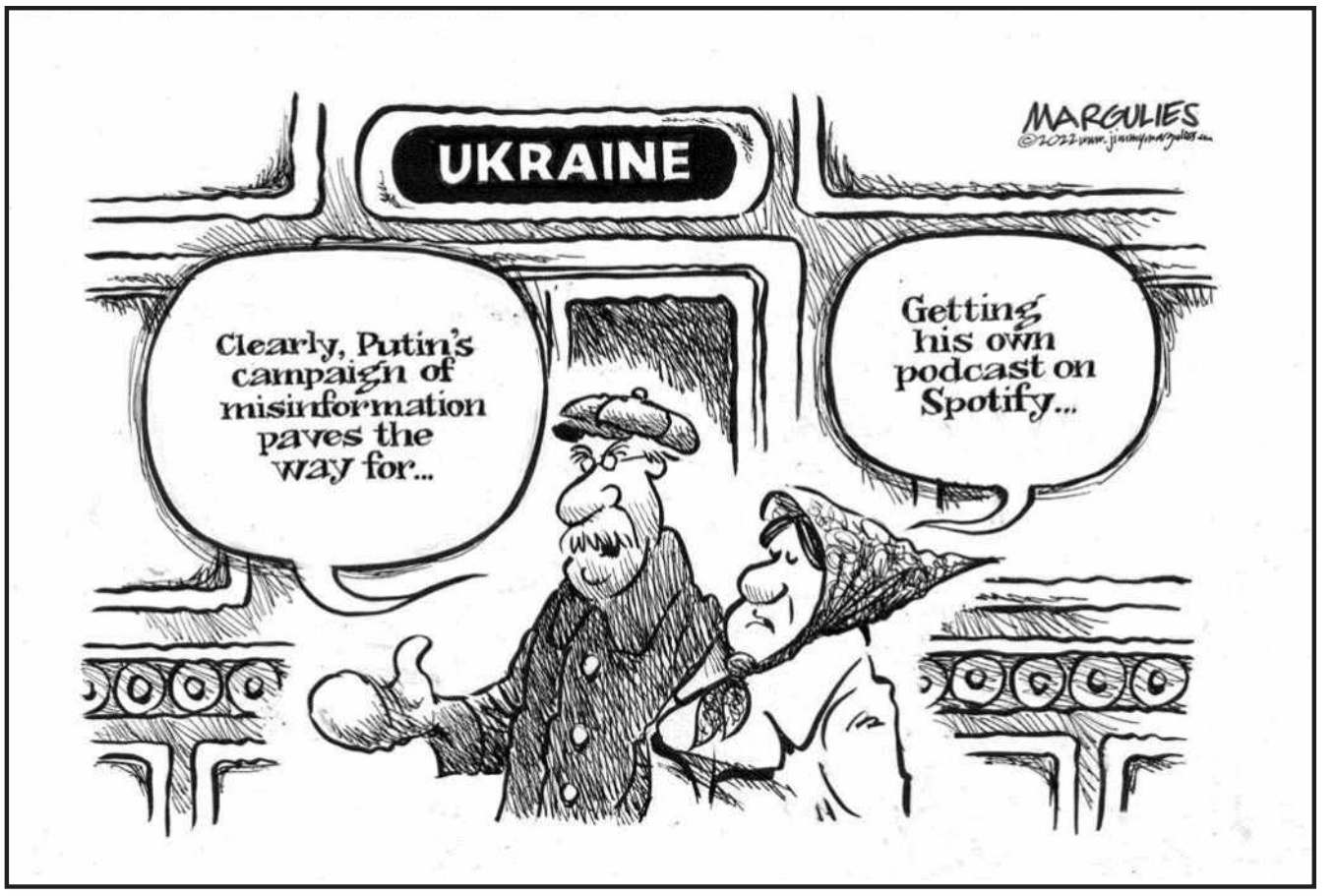
From the same president whose staff included people dedicated to retrieving his hand-shredded documents from the Oval Office and the residence, piecing them together and taping them with clear tape so they could be stored at the National Archives, as Politico reported in 2018.

The act is clear. Presidential records are not owned by a president. They are owned by the people.

And that's because the records are a critically important way to understand what actually went on during a president's term. As presidential historian Lindsay Chervinsky told The Post, "The only way that a president can really be held accountable long term is to preserve a record about who said what, who did what, what policies were encouraged or adopted, and that is such an important part of the long-term scope of accountability—beyond just elections and campaigns."

Held accountable. That's the very last thing this former president wants. Some of those ripped up records have already shown up in the Jan. 6 investigation. Still missing: most of the records of the calls he made or received as his supporters launched that assault on Congress.

See TRUMP on Next Page



Coups are happening where democracy is failing

By ELIZABETH SHACKELFORD
Chicago Tribune

Elizabeth Shackelford is a senior fellow on U.S. foreign policy with the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. She was previously a U.S. diplomat and is author of The Dissent Channel: American Diplomacy in a Dishonest Age.

The latest blow to democracy is the explosion of coups around the world. Weak democratic governments that are failing to deliver are being overthrown. This global phenomenon has been most evident in West Africa.

In the past 18 months, coups have occurred in Burkina Faso, Guinea and Chad. Mali has had two in that period, and Niger and Guinea-Bissau have narrowly escaped coup attempts. More coups occurred in 2021 alone than in the prior five years combined. Africa has been no stranger to coups since the postcolonial independence period began in the 1960s, but they had been on the decline for 20 years —until now.

This uptick in coups has occurred at a time of democratic decline globally. The specific circumstances of each of the recent coups are different, but two factors have consistently contributed to an environment conducive to military takeovers.

First, weak democratic governments have failed to demonstrate that they can deliver security or services for their citizens. In Burkina Faso and Mali, people have lived in fear under an increasingly violent insurgency that has killed thousands and displaced millions across the Sahel, and their governments have been incapable of getting it under control. Military governments are no panacea to insecurity, but the public has become receptive to the idea that strongmen and hard power can save them.

In some ways, international assistance has taken this approach too. International partners have responded to the uptick in violence with a focus on military solutions at the cost of strengthening democratic institutions. France has led this with a counterterrorism operation in the region that began in 2014, but the United States and others have also been deeply engaged.

Look no further than the generals who led the coups. Since 2008, military officers trained by the United States have attempted at least nine coups across West Africa, eight of which succeeded. Many of the U.S.-trained military units across the region have been implicated in serious human rights abuses as well.

As a way of addressing terrorism, this might make sense. But the conflicts in the Sahel are driven by underlying grievances that fueled local insurgencies well before the Islamic State group and al-Qaida entered the scene. Without addressing inequality, endemic poverty, scarce resources, ethnic conflict and poor governance, counterterrorism campaigns on their own are little more than whack-a-mole.

The West helps these militaries get stronger while democratic institutions struggle to gain a foothold, leaving populations disillusioned with their leadership. Improving institutions and governance is slow, making it an unsatisfying approach for donor countries seeking results. But leading with a security focus has failed. They should prioritize reinforcing democracy instead.

Second, international partners, including regional multilateral bodies, have been loath to take meaningful action against undemocratic acts in recent years. This has created a permissive environment in which strongmen have felt free to seize power with little concern for facing meaningful consequences.

This differs significantly from even a few years ago. In 2015, a coup attempt in Burkina Faso was met with uniform pushback, the threat of international intervention, and outcry not only from regional bodies like the African Union and the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS), but from the United Nations as well. African political leaders intervened to hold talks that ultimately resulted in an agreement for a return to civilian rule.

This kind of response has been missing from subsequent coup attempts. The U.N. Security Council, for one, has lost its bite. In 2015, both Russia and China joined the rest of the U.N. Security Council members in condemning the military junta in Burkina Faso. This strongly reinforced the acts of ECOWAS and the African Union, whose actions alone do little to impede military strongmen.

Changing geopolitical realities make it harder for the leading multilateral institutions to act in unison over even the most extreme offenses against international norms. In January, Russia and China blocked the U.N. Security Council from supporting ECOWAS' decision to sanction Mali's military leaders after they announced that elections would not occur for five years. The body could not even muster enough support to release statements against the 2021 coups in Chad and Guinea. If the leading democratic nations cannot rely on global consensus, they must look for other ways to discourage democratic backsliding.

The future of democracy depends on its ability to provide security and prosperity for its people. Those who want democracy to succeed must help make the case. The United States and its democratic allies must work to reinforce democracy in those places where it is getting a foothold, rewarding leaders who make it work and helping them where needed. We must also stop unintentionally undermining it with a fixation on short-term security. This means not only condemning coups but also discouraging other undemocratic acts. For example, international partners can use carrots as well as sticks to persuade long-standing strongmen to give up power and open the door for democratic change before circumstances invite unconstitutional ones.

If this administration really seeks a renewal of democracy worldwide, it must put its money where its mouth is on democracy and human rights.

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The changing military landscape in Guam

By BENJAMIN NICHOLSON
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rear Adm. Benjamin Nicholson is the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command senior military official and Joint Region Marianas commander.

Hafa Adai,

Prior to World War II, the U.S. military footprint in Guam was relatively small (fewer than 500 service members), with only a small Navy yard at Piti and a Marine Corps barracks at Sumay. Japanese forces invaded in December 1941 and occupied the island until the U.S. military liberation in July 1944.

The force laydown in Guam has undergone many changes over the years. After liberation, the U.S. military conducted a massive buildup in Guam, necessary to provide a staging and logistics area in order to bring an end to the war. Construction took place across the island, including the Glass breakwater protecting Apra Harbor; airfields at Orote Point, Naval Air Station Agana, Harmon Field, Northwest Field near Ritidian Point, and Pati Point; and massive lay-down areas across the island for the material and personnel needed to press west toward Japan. Ultimately, the final acts to close the war came from the Marianas in August 1945.

Five years of peace followed in the region before the situation changed again. The Korean War, Vietnam War, and massive expansion of the Soviet Union during the Cold War resulted in a buildup of U.S. forces in the region once again. Guam continued to be an area with a large U.S. military population in multiple areas across the island. At the height of this period, the active duty military population was more than 26,000 (not including family members).

After the Cold War ended, the "peace dividend" of the 1990s led to a dramatic drawdown of U.S. forces in Guam. During the Base Realignment and Closure process, more than 7,000 acres of Department of Defense land was transferred to the Government of Guam, including Naval Air Station Agana (now Won Pat International Airport), Apra Harbor Naval Complex (now commercial Port of Guam), Harmon Field (now Harmon industrial area) and many former military housing areas. The number of active duty military personnel decreased to around 3,000 at its lowest point in the early 2000s, yet again, changing the military presence in Guam.

The redistribution of forces throughout the years, in response to the threat environment, is helpful in understanding the changing military landscape in Guam today. These discussions involve issues of federal and territorial relations, cultural identity, military necessity and the resources required to defend this region. The pacing threat in our region has changed, and it is the mission and responsibility of the DoD to ensure that we are ready. The way in which the U.S. military manages land in Guam has changed as well.

The transfer of properties to the Government of Guam through the "Net Negative" initiative was undertaken to ensure the overall quantity of DoD land in Guam would be no greater than before 2011. This was done while preparing to increase the military population, primarily due to the Marine Corps relocation. Other changes have taken place to keep pace with the threats to the region including permanent basing of submarines, infrastructure improvements across the bases, and adding a ballistic missile defense capability with an Army missile battery. This has happened while the amount of DoD land in Guam has continued to decrease, with more than 600 acres transferred to the Government of Guam since 2011 and almost 120 additional acres currently in the transfer process. The military is living up to its promise of operating from, and defending Guam, while utilizing less land.

Our adversaries throughout the world have continued to build and train their forces, and new threats have emerged, underlining the importance of Guam's defense. In the past month, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) has launched seven missile tests in this region, most recently confirming that they are capable of striking Guam.

Based on this information, military capabilities must increase so that we are postured to defend America's strategic outpost in the Pacific. Former U.S. Indo-Pacific Commander Adm. Philip Davidson said, "Guam's defense is homeland defense," and I could not agree more.

As the need for a 360-degree missile defense system for Guam is realized, the U.S. military remains committed to our promise of a smaller land footprint and optimizing the current DoD land. In order to fulfill these operational requirements and remain committed to our "Net Negative" promise, we are only assessing current DoD land for potential missile defense sites in Guam. This may require us to re-assess existing DoD land, for which there was previously not a defined future military use, labeled as "excess" in previous annual DoD land holdings reports.

A recent example of utilizing land labeled "excess" was the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A U.S. Navy Expeditionary Medical Facility (a tent city field hospital) was erected in 2020 at the South Finegayan site, just south of U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz. With COVID-19 a significant health threat to the region, the U.S. military was able to respond for the greater good of the entire community, by utilizing existing DoD land and without encroaching on local resources.

We honor and demonstrate this commitment by continuing to optimize, respect, and cultivate DoD land for homeland defense while staying mindful of the impact to the community. Defense is not just about deterring our adversaries through our military's presence in the region, but having the concrete capability to neutralize any hostile forces that may threaten it.

Misinformation about misinformation

By TYLER COWEN
Bloomberg News

Tyler Cowen is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist. He is a professor of economics at George Mason University and writes for the blog Marginal Revolution. His books include Big Business: A Love Letter to an American Anti-Hero.

It is conventional wisdom that misinformation—particularly about COVID and vaccines, and often enabled by social and other media—is worse than it's ever been. It's hard to measure misinformation over time. But the premise that there was ever a golden age of accurate information, especially about public health, is suspect.

I just turned 60, so my youth is now fairly distant. Still, I can recall debates about smoking: not so much whether it was bad for you—that science was established, and the federal government had already initiated an anti-smoking campaign—but whether it was really all that bad. And I'm not talking about the occasional cigarette, but one or two packs a day. The scientific knowledge wasn't nearly as socially salient as it is today, and there were many millions more smokers. That meant social opinion was invariably somewhat split.

Or consider the debate, such as it is, over exercise. With each passing decade, the health benefits of exercise have become better known. In earlier decades this point simply wasn't stressed. Regardless of whether we in fact exercise, we now obsess over it and boast about it—to the point of becoming annoying. Social media has definitely played a role here, as you can now tweet that you just ran a marathon or climbed some rocks. And if you don't exercise, you are made to feel guilty about it.

Seat belts are another area where the state of public knowledge has changed for the better. The first few years I drove, I did so without a seat belt—and not because I was a risk-loving, rebellious teenager. It simply wasn't that unusual at the time, and I don't recall being scolded very much by my fellow passengers for not wearing a seat belt. Fortunately, I wised up. Mandatory seat belt laws have spread, but public understanding has also improved. This counts as a public health information triumph.

These few areas of huge improvement all have significant consequences for human health and longevity. They are not small areas of concern. But other issues remain debatable.

Diet is a more contentious area with less consensus, even today. And clearly obesity problems have worsened. But was the past dietary advice of the medical establishment so great? My father, after having a heart attack and being diagnosed as a diabetic, was advised to eat lots of pasta and bread because they were considered vegetarian. He didn't have access to many alternate sources of information and so he complied, probably for the worse. More generally, the medical establishment overrated carbohydrates and probably worried too much about the health risks of meat.

There is also a lot more awareness about the health costs of various jobs, ranging from chemical exposure to repetitive motion problems. Maybe there has been overreaction and overregulation on some of these issues—but in earlier decades there was definitely underreaction. And today, while there are huge amounts of misinformation about air pollution and especially climate change (on both sides to be fair; it is a very serious but not existential threat), overall I prefer the awareness level of the current world to that of the past. These too are public health issues that will only grow in importance.

One thing I do recall from my early school years: a very positive attitude toward all sorts of vaccinations. At least in my school district, and I believe more generally, they were seen as a kind of miracle. The measles epidemic peaked in 1958, only a few years before my birth, and polio had also been a problem (Neil Young, only 16 years my senior, contracted it as a child).

I don't know if "miracle cures" were worse then or now. Now there is hydroxychloroquine for COVID. In an earlier era there was laetrile for cancer, and there was a long and painful experience with false cures for HIV-AIDS.

Overall, I am genuinely unsure that misinformation about public health has become worse in my lifetime. My uncertainty is only strengthened when I do a reality check of how much general public misinformation there has been over the last six decades. A lot of experts and members of the public used to think the economy of the Soviet Union was just fine. They thought the Vietnam War was OK. They saw Nixon's wage and price controls as justified.

Some of the worst misinformation of today is about the supposedly wonderful past.

TRUMP

From Page 8

On the Mar-a-Lago boxes, Trump insisted to The Post that he had engaged in "collaborative and respectful" discussions with the National Archives. But that's impossible to square with a president who routinely tore up documents.

There's a chance that, as some have theorized, a president who was so mired in his disbelief that he had lost the 2020 election had to pack up in such a hurry that he (his staff, we mean) grabbed things they shouldn't have, by accident. Maybe.

But then you remember his track record on flouting the law, even the basic one about keeping presidential records. You remember his refusal to speak up when his supporters were attacking the Capitol, beating police and chanting "Hang Pence." You remember the records management specialist whose job it was to clean up after the president, a grown man with many legal advisers, because no one could stop him from "filing" letters in the garbage can or shredding documents into confetti-size pieces.

You think of all that. And you say: Go, National Archives, go.

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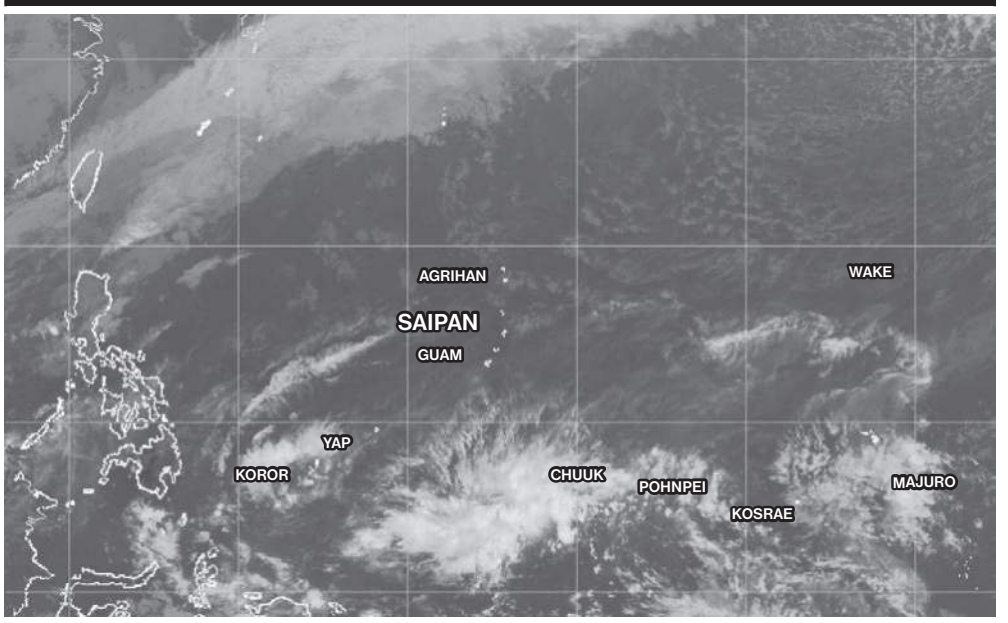
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. Lows in the mid 70s.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
85º 74º	84º 76	85º 76º	86º 75º	86º 75º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:53 AM, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2022

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

The morning`s satellite imagery showed a few clouds over the Marianas. Radar shows isolated showers passing over the islands.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

■ Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

■ Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.

■ Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.

■ Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

■ Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

■ Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html

■ Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

■ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

■ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

■ Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

• Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

• Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

• Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	29 / 24 °F
Palau	PM Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F
Yap	Thunderstorms	28 / 24 °F
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	29 / 27 °F
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	29 / 27 °F
Majuro	Thunderstorms	29 / 27 °F

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	06:41 AM	18:20 PM
Wednesday	06:41 AM	18:21 PM
Thursday	06:40 AM	18:21 PM
Friday	06:40 AM	18:21 PM
Saturday	06:39 AM	18:21 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	05:35 PM	17:07 PM
Wednesday	-	06:21 PM	18:00 PM
Thursday	-	07:03 PM	18:53 PM
Friday	-	07:43 PM	19:45 PM
Saturday	-	08:22 PM	20:37 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Sunny	23 / 16 °F
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	-2 / -12 °F
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	19 / 15 °F
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	26 / 20 °F
London	Rain	10 / 8 °F
Los Angeles	AM Showers	17 / 7 °F
Manila	Partly Cloudy	32 / 24°F
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	24 / 16 °F
Miami	Cloudy/Wind	23 / 21 °F
New York	Mostly Sunny	-2 / -3 °F
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	11 / 3 °F
Paris	PM Light Rain	11 / 10 °F
Busan	Partly Cloudy	7 / -3 °F
Rome	Thunderstorms	14 / 5 °F
Salem	Sunny	18 / 6 °F
San Francisco	Sunny	13 / 9 °F
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	29 / 25°F
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	12 / 2 °F
Washington, DC	Sunny	6 / -2 °F

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
01:04 AM	Low Tide	-0.32
08:14 AM	High Tide	1.61
1:31 PM	Low Tide	1.02
6:23 PM	High Tide	1.65

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2022

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	7:20am	8:05am	2, 4, 6
UA117	9:50am	10:35am	1, 3, 5, 7

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	6:30am	8:20am	1, 5
UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	7:20am	9:50pm	2, 4, 6 via Guam
UA117/183	9:50am	9:50pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via Guam

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

7C3406	3:10PM	6:55PM	Every 4 days (Jan 29-Mar 2)
TW9308	3:30PM	7:20PM	3, 7
OZ6243	4:00PM	7:40PM	3, 6

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

BX621	3:10PM	6:30PM	7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA116	5:30am	6:16am	2, 4, 6
UA174	8:00am	8:46am	1, 3, 5, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	4, 7
UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	2, 5
UA184	10:55pm	4:45am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	10:40pm	6:16am+1	5 via Guam
UA184/174	10:40pm	8:46am+1	2 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55pm	6:16am+1	1, 3 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:46am+1	4, 6, 7 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3405	8:30AM	2:10PM	Every 4 days (Jan 29-Mar 2)
OZ6233	9:00AM	2:30PM	3, 6
TW9307	10:00AM	2:20PM	3, 7

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

BX622	8:00AM	1:10PM	7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Daily
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Daily
1303	1:30PM	2:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1304	3:30PM	4:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Daily
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Daily
3103	1:30PM	3:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3104	4:30PM	5:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Daily
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Daily
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business

Young workers give unions new hope

By DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP BUSINESS WRITER

After decades of decline, U.S. unions have a new reason for hope: younger workers.

Workers in their 20s—and even in their teens—are leading ongoing efforts to unionize companies large and small, from Starbucks and REI to local cannabis dispensaries. The Alphabet Workers Union, formed last year and now representing 800 Google employees, is run by five people who are under 35.

Multiple polls show union approval is high—and growing—among the youngest workers. And U.S. union membership levels are even ticking upward for workers between 25 and 34, even as they decline among other age groups.

Between 2019 and 2021, the overall percentage of U.S. union members stayed flat. But the percentage of workers ages 25-34 who are union members rose from 8.8% to 9.4%, or around 68,000 workers, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Young workers say they see unions as the best way to combat wage inequality and poor working conditions. For some, personal heroes like Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders—a vocal labor advocate—have piqued their interest in unions. Others say the coronavirus pandemic caused them to rethink what they deserve from their jobs.

"Whatever this is isn't working," said Adriana Alvarez, 29, a McDonald's employee in Chicago. "We obviously need change."

When a union organizer first approached Alvarez in 2014, she was skeptical of his goal to raise her pay to $15 per hour. At the time, she was making $8.50 per hour and hadn't gotten a raise in three years.

But she got involved with the Fight for $15 labor group, organizing protests and learning about her rights. McDonald's workers still aren't unionized, but she says her managers are more respectful and have stopped illegal practices, like making workers reimburse the restaurant if they accidentally accept counterfeit money. She now makes $16.70 per hour.

Like many of her peers, Alvarez didn't grow up in a union household. U.S. union membership peaked in 1954, when 35% of workers belonged to unions. By last year, that had fallen to 10.3%.

Some of that decline is due to shrinking numbers in sectors with high unionization rates, like the auto industry. But states and courts have also steadily chipped away at unions' power.

Twenty-seven states now have "right-to-work" laws, which prohibit a company and a union from signing a contract that requires workers to pay dues to the union that represents them. And last year, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a 1975 California regulation that had allowed union organizers to meet with agricultural workers on company property.

Against that backdrop, unions last year saw some of their biggest increases among young workers in utilities, the motion picture industry and the federal government, said Hayley Brown, a research associate with the Center for Economic and Policy Research, a nonpartisan think tank.

Brown said there are signs those numbers will continue to rise this year under the labor-friendly Biden administration, which issued proposals this month aimed at increasing unionization rates for federal workers and contractors. In January, there were 170 petitions filed for union elections with the National Labor Relations Board; that was more than double the 83 filed in January 2021.

Dry winter drains reservoirs, ruins crops in Spain, Portugal

AP

Parts of the old village of Aceredo, submerged three decades ago when a hydropower dam flooded the valley, are photographed emerged due to drought at the Lindoso reservoir, in northwestern Spain, Saturday, Feb. 12, 2022.

ACEREDO, Spain (AP)—Roofs peeking out of the water have become a common sight every summer at the Lindoso reservoir in northwestern Spain. In especially dry years, parts would appear of the old village of Aceredo, submerged three decades ago when a hydropower dam flooded the valley.

But never before has the skeleton of the village emerged in its entirety in the middle of the usually wet winter season.

With almost no rain for two months and not much expected any time soon, the ruins of Aceredo are dredging up a mix of emotions for locals as they see the rusted carcass of a car, a stone fountain with water still spouting and the old road leading to what used to be the local bar.

"The whole place used to be all vineyards, orange trees. It was all green. It was beautiful," said 72-year-old José Luis Penín, who used to stop at the bar with pals at the end of a day's fishing.

"Look at it now," said Penín, who lives in the same county, pointing at the cracked, yellow bed of the reservoir. "It's so sad."

While the arid zones of the Iberian Peninsula have historically experienced periods of drought, experts say climate change has exacerbated the problem. This year, amid record levels of low or no rainfall at all, farmers in both Portugal and Spain, who are growing produce for all of Europe, are worried that their crops for this season will be ruined.

In the last three months of 2021, Spain recorded just 35% of the average rainfall it had seen during the same period from 1981 to 2010. But there has been almost no rain since then.

According to the national weather agency AEMET, in this century, only in 2005 has there been a January with almost no rain. If clouds don't unleash in the next two weeks, emergency subsidies for farmers will be needed, authorities said.

But Rubén del Campo, a spokesman for the weather service, said the below-average rainfall over the last six months is likely to continue for several more weeks, with hopes that spring will bring much-needed relief.

While only 10% of Spain has officially been declared under a "prolonged drought," there are large areas, particularly in the south, which are facing extreme shortages that could impact the irrigation of crops.

The valley around the Guadalquivir River in Spain's southwest was declared under prolonged drought in November. It is now the focus of a fierce environmental dispute over water rights near Doñana National Park, a World Heritage wetland site. The government of the Andalusia region wants to grant water rights to farmers on land near the park, but critics say the move will further endanger a major wildlife refuge that is already drying up.

"The past two, three years have been dry, with the tendency toward less and less rain," said Andrés Góngora, a 46-year-old tomato farmer in southern Almería.

US suspends Mexican avocado imports on eve of Super Bowl

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Mexico has acknowledged that the U.S. government has suspended all imports of Mexican avocados after a U.S. plant safety inspector in Mexico received a threat.

The surprise suspension was confirmed late Saturday on the eve of the Super Bowl, the biggest sales opportunity of the year for Mexican avocado growers—though it would not affect game-day consumption since those xavocados had already been shipped.

Avocado exports are the latest victim of the drug cartel turf battles and extortion of avocado growers in the western state of Michoacan, the only state in Mexico fully authorized to export to the U.S. market.

The U.S. government suspended all imports of Mexican avocados "until further notice" after a U.S. plant safety inspector in Mexico received a threatening message, Mexico's Agriculture Department said in a statement.

"U.S. health authorities ... made the decision after one of their officials, who was carrying out inspections in Uruapan, Michoacan, received a threatening message on his official cellphone," the department wrote.

The import ban came on the day that the Mexican avocado growers and packers association unveiled its Super Bowl ad for this year. Mexican exporters have taken out the pricey ads for almost a decade in a bid to associate guacamole as a Super Bowl tradition.

Nation

US: Over 130,000 Russian troops now staged outside Ukraine

WASHINGTON (AP)— Some airlines canceled flights to the Ukrainian capital and troops there unloaded fresh shipments of weapons from NATO members Sunday, as its president sought to project confidence in the face of U.S. warnings of possible invasion within days by a growing number of Russian forces.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy spoke to President Joe Biden for about an hour, insisting that Ukrainians had the country under "safe and reliable protection" against feared attack by a far stronger Russian military, aides said afterward. The White House said both agreed to keep pushing both deterrence and diplomacy to try to stave off a feared Russian military offensive.

The Biden administration has become increasingly outspoken about its concerns that Russia will stage an incident in the coming days that would create a false pretext for an invasion of Ukraine.

U.S. and European intelligence findings in recent days have sparked worries that Russia may try to target a scheduled Ukrainian military exercise slated for Tuesday in eastern Ukraine to launch such a "false-flag operation," according to two people familiar with the matter. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about it.

American intelligence officials believe targeting the military exercise is just one of multiple options that Russia has weighed as a possibility for a false-flag operation. The White House has underscored that they do not know with certainty if President Vladimir Putin has made a final determination to launch an invasion.

Moscow's forces are massing on Ukraine's north, east and south in what the Kremlin insists are military exercises.

A U.S. official updated the Biden administration's estimate for how many Russian forces are now staged near Ukraine's borders to more than 130,000, up from the more than 100,000 the U.S. has cited publicly in previous weeks. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the administration's conclusions.

Zelenskyy has repeatedly played down the U.S. warnings, questioning the increasingly strident statements from U.S. officials in recent days that Russia could be planning to invade as soon as midweek.

"We understand all the risks, we understand that there are risks," he said in a broadcast Saturday. "If you, or anyone else, has additional information regarding a 100% Russian invasion starting on the 16th, please forward that information to us."

But while Zelenskyy has urged against panic that he fears could undermine Ukraine's economy, he and his civilian and military leaders also are preparing defenses, soliciting and receiving a flow of arms from the U.S. and other NATO members.

A military cargo aircraft carrying U.S.-made Stinger anti-aircraft missiles and ammunition from NATO member Lithuania landed Sunday, bolstering the country's defenses against any attack by air.

AP
An instructor shows a Kalashnikov assault rifle as members of a Ukrainian far-right group train, in Kyiv, Ukraine, Sunday, Feb. 13, 2022.

Biden warns Putin of 'severe costs' of Ukraine invasion

WASHINGTON (AP)— President Joe Biden told Russia's Vladimir Putin that invading Ukraine would cause "widespread human suffering" and that the West was committed to diplomacy to end the crisis but "equally prepared for other scenarios," the White House said Saturday. It offered no suggestion that the hourlong call diminished the threat of an imminent war in Europe.

Biden also said the United States and its allies would respond "decisively and impose swift and severe costs" if the Kremlin attacked its neighbor, according to the White House.

The two presidents spoke a day after Biden's national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, warned that U.S. intelligence shows a Russian invasion could begin within days and before the Winter Olympics in Beijing end on Feb. 20.

Russia denies it intends to invade but has massed well over 100,000 troops near the Ukrainian border and has sent troops to exercises in neighboring Belarus, encircling Ukraine on three sides. U.S. officials say Russia's buildup of firepower has reached the point where it could invade on short notice.

The conversation came at a critical moment for what has become the biggest security crisis between Russia and the West since the Cold War. U.S. officials believe they have mere days to prevent an invasion and enormous bloodshed in Ukraine. And while the U.S. and its NATO allies have no plans to send troops to Ukraine to fight Russia, an invasion and resulting punishing sanctions could reverberate far beyond the former Soviet republic, affecting energy supplies, global markets and the power balance in Europe.

"President Biden was clear with President Putin that while the United States remains prepared to engage in diplomacy, in full coordination with our Allies and partners, we are equally prepared for other scenarios," the White House statement said.

The call was "professional and substantive" but produced "no fundamental change in the dynamic that has been unfolding now for several weeks," according to a senior administration official who briefed reporters following the call on condition of anonymity.

The official added that it remains unclear whether Putin has made a final decision to move forward with military action.

ACROSS THE NATION

Prosecutors expected to rest in 2nd trial in Floyd's killing

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP)— After nearly three weeks of testimony, federal prosecutors planned to rest their case Monday against three former Minneapolis police officers who are charged with violating George Floyd's civil rights. Once the prosecution rests in the trial of J. Alexander Kueng, Thomas Lane and Tou Thao, defense attorneys will start presenting their witnesses. The attorney for Lane has said his client will testify. Attorneys for Thao and Kueng haven't said if they will. The officers are charged with violating Floyd's constitutional rights while acting under government authority. All three are accused of depriving Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man, of medical care while he was handcuffed, facedown as Officer Derek Chauvin pressed his knee onto Floyd's neck for 9 1/2 minutes. Kueng, who is Black, knelt on Floyd's back; Lane, who is white, held down his legs; and Thao, who is Hmong American, kept bystanders back. Kueng and Thao are also accused of failing to intervene to stop the May 25, 2020, killing, which triggered protests worldwide and a reexamination of racism and policing. The charges allege that the officers' actions resulted in Floyd's death.

Accused Texas school shooter to remain at state hospital

SANTA FE, Texas (AP)— A man accused of fatally shooting 10 people at a Texas high school in 2018 will continue receiving treatment in a state mental health facility as doctors say he remains incompetent to stand trial. Dimitrios Pagourtzis, 21, has been at the North Texas State Hospital in Vernon since early December 2019. He was initially committed for 120 days. But he has remained at the hospital since because doctors say he is not competent to be tried. On Friday, Judge John Ellisor ordered that Pagourtzis stay another 12 months at the facility. It was the third time Ellisor ordered that Pagourtzis remain at the hospital for a 12-month period. Pagourtzis' attorney, Nicholas Poehl, said he was not surprised by the judge's decision. "We remain hopeful that the case will be resolved at some point in the future, whether that involves trial, or a civil commitment which feels increasingly inevitable," Poehl said in a statement.

Asia

Man accused of blasphemy stoned to death in Pakistan

MULTAN, Pakistan (AP)—An enraged mob stoned to death a middle-aged man for allegedly desecrating the Quran in a remote village in eastern Pakistan, police said Sunday.

The custodian of a local mosque said he saw the man burning the Muslim holy book inside the mosque Saturday evening and told others before informing police, according to police spokesman Chaudhry Imran. The violence took place in a village in the district of Khanewal in Punjab province.

Imran said police rushed to the scene, where a man was found surrounded by an angry crowd. Officer Mohammad Iqbal and two subordinates tried to take custody of the man but the group began throwing stones at them, seriously injuring Iqbal and slightly injuring the other two officers.

Police officers escort relatives carrying the body of Mushtaq Ahmed, 41, who was killed when an enraged mob stoned him to death for allegedly desecrating the Quran, during his funeral in Tulamba, a remote village in the district of Khanewal in eastern Pakistan, Sunday, Feb. 13, 2022. AP

Munawar Gujjar, chief of Tulamba police station, said he rushed reinforcements to the mosque but they did not arrive before the mob had stoned to death the man and hung his body from a tree.

Gujjar said the victim was identified as Mushtaq Ahmed, 41, of a nearby village.

"The ill-fated man has been mentally unstable for the last 15 years and according to his family often went missing from home for days begging and eating whatever he could find," he said. He said the body was handed over to the family.

Gunmen kill 9 in ambush in PH town

COTABATO, Philippines (AP)—Gunmen in the southern Philippines killed a Muslim rebel and eight of his companions in a road ambush Saturday that authorities said was apparently sparked by a land dispute.

Several attackers raked two SUVs with assault rifle fire in an early morning ambush in an isolated farming village in Guindulungan town in Maguindanao province, killing nine people and wounding three others who were on their way to a meeting to resolve a long-standing clan dispute, police and local officials said.

Many such disputes over land, money and politics have been settled violently in southern areas with weak law enforcement, a surfeit of large numbers of loose firearms and the presence of armed groups controlled by powerful clans and politicians.

In November 2009, the country's worst politically motivated massacre in the same province left at least 57 people dead, including more than 30 media workers. A court in 2019 found 49 people guilty, including members of an influential family.

One of those killed in Saturday's ambush was Peges Mamasainged, a member of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the largest Muslim rebel group in the south of the predominantly Roman Catholic nation that signed a peace deal with the government in 2014. The rebels said his killing was apparently triggered by a clan dispute.

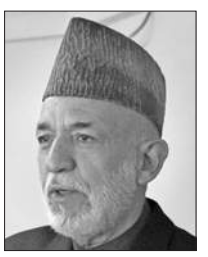
A part of the insurgent group, which has thousands of fighters, has returned to civilian life in exchange for livelihood packages from the government under the peace deal and efforts were continuing to fully demobilize other guerrillas. Former rebel leaders have become administrators of a larger and more powerful Muslim autonomy region but smaller and separate insurgent bands linked to the Islamic State group continue to pose a threat.

'Biden order on frozen funds is an atrocity'

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Afghanistan's former president on Sunday called a White House order to unfreeze $3.5 billion in Afghan assets held in the U.S. for families of 9/11 victims an atrocity against the Afghan people.

Former President Hamid Karzai at a packed news conference sought the help of Americans, particularly the families of the thousands killed in the 9/11 terrorist attacks, to press President Joe Biden to rescind last week's order. He called it "unjust and unfair," saying Afghans have also been victims of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden.

Bin Laden was brought to Afghanistan by Afghan warlords after being expelled from Sudan in 1996. Those same warlords would later ally with the U.S.-led coalition to oust the Taliban in 2001. However, it was Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar who refused to hand over bin Laden to the U.S. after the devastating 9/11 attacks that killed thousands.



Karzai

"The people of Afghanistan share the pain of the American people, share the pain of the families and loved ones of those who died, who lost their lives in the tragedy of September 11," said Karzai. "We commiserate with them (but) Afghan people are as much victims as those families who lost their lives. ... Withholding money or seizing money from the people of Afghanistan in their name is unjust and unfair and an atrocity against Afghan people."

President Biden's order signed last Friday freed $7 billion in Afghan assets currently held in the United States, to be divided between 9/11 victims and humanitarian aid to Afghans.

World

War, peace, stalemate?

» Week ahead may decide Ukraine's fate

WASHINGTON (AP)—Even if a Russian invasion of Ukraine doesn't happen in the next few days, the crisis is reaching a critical inflection point with European stability and the future of East-West relations hanging in the balance.

A convergence of events over the coming week could determine whether the stalemate is resolved peacefully or Europe is at war. At stake are Europe's post-Cold War security architecture and long-agreed limits on the deployment of conventional military and nuclear forces there.

"This next 10 days or so will be critical," said Ian Kelly, a retired career diplomat and former U.S. ambassador to Georgia who now teaches international relations at Northwestern University.

The Biden administration on Friday said an invasion could happen at any moment, with a possible target date of Wednesday, according to intelligence picked up by the United States, and Washington was evacuating almost all of its embassy staff in Kyiv, Ukraine's capital.

A phone call between President Joe Biden and Russian leader Vladimir Putin on Saturday did nothing to ease tensions. Biden and Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, spoke on Sunday.

AP

Ukrainians attend a rally in central Kyiv, Ukraine, Saturday, Feb. 12, 2022, during a protest against the potential escalation of the tension between Russia and Ukraine.

Even before the latest U.S. warnings and diplomatic moves, analysts saw this as a critical week for the future of Ukraine.

"Russia and the United States are approaching a peak of the conflict of their interests regarding a future shape of the European order," Timofei Bordachev, said head of the Center for European Research at Moscow's Higher School of Economics. "The parties may take action against each other that will go much farther than what was considered admissible quite recently," he said in a recent analysis.

In the week ahead, Washington and NATO are expecting Moscow's formal response after they rejected its main security demands, and major Russian military drills in Belarus, conducted as part of a deployment near Ukraine, are to end. The fate of the Russian troops now in Belarus will be key to judging the Kremlin's intentions.

At the same time, the Winter Olympics in China, often cited as a potential deterrent to immediate Russian action, will conclude Feb. 20. Although U.S. officials have said they believe an invasion could take place before then, the date is still considered important.

And an important international security conference is taking place in Munich next weekend, with Vice President Kamala Harris, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and top European officials planning to attend.

WORLD BRIEFS

German leader travels to Russia, Ukraine as tensions grow

BERLIN (AP)—German Chancellor Olaf Scholz is flying to Ukraine and Russia this week in an effort to help defuse escalating tensions as Western intelligence officials warn that a Russian invasion of Ukraine is increasingly imminent and Germany has called on its citizens to leave Ukraine as quickly as possible. Ahead of his first visits as chancellor to Kyiv on Monday and Moscow on Tuesday for meetings with the Ukrainian and Russian presidents, Scholz has renewed his warning to Russia, as well as his advocacy of continuing diplomacy in multiple formats. "It is our job to ensure that we prevent a war in Europe, in that we send a clear message to Russia that any military aggression would have consequences that would be very high for Russia and its prospects, and that we are united with our allies," Scholz told the German parliament's upper house on Friday. "But at the same time that also includes using all opportunities for talks and further development," Scholz said.

Greek farmers threaten to block highways in energy protest

LARISSA, Greece (AP)—Greek farmers say they are determined to shut down all the country's major highways to protest rising energy costs. At a gathering south of the city of Larissa in central Greece, they decided Sunday to demand a meeting with Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis. As all of Europe is facing rising energy costs, Greek farmers are demanding subsidies to reduce their fuel costs and an end to the electricity price adjustment cost, which reflects changes in the price of oil and natural gas imports. Greece has among the highest taxes on fuel in the 27-nation European Union, accounting for about two-thirds of the price.

Police clear way to key US-Canada bridge, but still closed

WINDSOR, Ontario (AP)—Police moved in to clear and arrest the remaining protesters near the busiest U.S.-Canadian border crossing Sunday, ending a demonstration against COVID-19 restrictions that has hurt the economy of both nations even as they held back from a crackdown on a larger protest in the capital, Ottawa. The protest in Ottawa has paralyzed downtown, infuriated residents who are fed up with police inaction and turned up pressure on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who presided at a Cabinet meeting late Sunday. The demonstrations have reverberated across Canada and beyond, with similar convoys in France, New Zealand and the Netherlands. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security warned that truck convoys may be in the works in the United States.

Overdrive

By BARRY SPYKER
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Hyundai Tucson leaps forward with bold, new design

(DREW PHILLIPS/HYUNDAI/TNS)
The 2022 Hyundai Tucson offers a 2.5-liter, direct-injected and multi-port-injected gasoline engine, as well as 1.6-liter, direct-injected, turbocharged hybrid and plug-in hybrid powertrains.

Hyundai typically responds boldly when faced with a challenge. They're the guys, after all, who brought us the 10-year, 100,000-mile warranty to assure those who were still unsure about the Korean carmaker.

But this year's challenge in the compact-crossover market is Mount Everest-like: Build a new Tucson capable of taking on the giants: Honda CR-V and Toyota RAV-4, who currently lead Tucson by a couple-hundred thousand car lengths. That amounts to nearly triple Tucson's sales midway through last year, according to one report.

Challenge accepted, apparently. The 2022 Tucson has turned heads of buyers and analysts alike with its truly bold, distinctive look, more space for passengers and stuff, and better tech and interior materials quality. And Hyundai threw in some clever design features with a wink and a nod.

Designers say they've taken the fourth-generation Tucson to a new level with "parametric dynamics." Daytime running lights and turn signals are integrated into the bold, jewel-like grille and can only be seen when turned on. Headlights are situated in two lower pods in the bumper, where fog lights often reside. It's a sharp and aggressive look at night.

Angular panels and squared-off wheel arches sharpen the profile, and slash-shaped LEDs on each side of the rear are connected by a full-width light bar. The Hyundai logo is incorporated into the rear glass. Another clever feature: the placement of the rear wiper, hidden underneath the spoiler. Kudos, Hyundai.

Folks will love Tucson's expanded dimensions: It's longer by 6.1 inches, has a 3.4-inch longer wheelbase, and is taller and wider by just over a half-inch. That means more room (six cubic feet more, says Hyundai) to stretch out, especially in the rear seat, and enough room in back for bags or even bikes. It has 38.7 cubic feet of space in the rear, 74.8 cubes with rear seats folded, and a two-level load floor that allows more efficient use of the space.

Around town or on the highway, Tucson delivers a smooth, quiet ride. The suspension is tuned for comfort and soaks up most bumps and divots in the road. Corners are handled well enough but there is some body roll.

It could use more pep. It's powered by a naturally aspirated 2.5-liter 4-cylinder engine that puts out 187 horsepower. Mated to an 8-speed automatic, the Tucson strolls to 60 mph in a leisurely 9.3 seconds, the quarter-mile in 17 seconds. That's lazy acceleration, although for many that's not really a priority in this segment.

The top-line Limited offers paddle shifters for some added kick. Or go hybrid: a turbocharged 1.6-liter 4-cylinder engine in the hybrid and plug-in hybrid versions of the Tucson perform better with 227 hp and 261 hp, respectively.

All-wheel-drive is standard in both, optional in the nonhybrids ($1,400) except for the top-line Limited. Variable torque distribution allows you to lock in a 50-50 grip for improved balance in slippery conditions.

Meanwhile, four drive modes—Snow, Sport, Smart and Normal—adjust throttle, shift points and steering sensitivity. Cool feature alert: The digital instrument panel flashes a different color for each mode.

In the best of circumstances, the EPA estimates 24 mpg city and 29 highway for a combined figure of 26 mpg. The hybrids, not surprisingly, do better at around 38 mpg.

Tucson's five-seat cabin has risen to new levels, too. Where else can you find a panoramic sunroof at this level? The interior has an upscale look this year, with higher quality materials and a handsome dashboard with narrow air vents streaming across the top.

One elegant feature, although not universally loved, is a push-button gear selector. Another is the wireless phone charger.

While lower trims get buttons and knobs, the Limited gets a 10.25-inch touchscreen for infotainment, climate and audio, and it's compatible with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto. Behind the wheel is a 10.25-inch fully digital instrument display with configurable data center.

Front seats in the Limited are trimmed in leather, heated/ventilated and bolstered for extra support. There is ample room for heads and legs, and seats offer 8-way power adjustments. Rear-seat leg room increased by 3 inches and can accommodate two adults or three kids comfortably. The seats recline for extra comfort and fold flat for cargo.

Available on lower trims and standard on the Limited are a hands-free power lift gate, heated steering wheel, eight-speaker Bose audio system and ambient lighting with a choice of 64 colors or combinations thereof.

Standard safety on lower trims include adaptive cruise control, lane-keep assist and lane departure warning, and automated emergency braking with pedestrian detection. The Limited also includes Hyundai's Highway Driving Assist, a highly regarded semi-autonomous driving system.

Additional safety features include blind-spot cameras with images in the gauge cluster, a surround-view camera, remote parking assist, and front and rear parking sensors.

Hyundai continues to surprise with bold ideas, and the redesigned Tucson, with its distinct exterior design and refined and roomier cabin,

NUTS & BOLTS

- MSRP: $36,100
- Includes: Includes semi-autonomous drive system, 10.25-inch touchscreen, digital instrument display, navigation, panoramic sunroof, remote park assist, surround-view and blind-spot cameras.
- What's all the excitement about? Fourth-generation Tucson gets complete redesign with bold new look, lots more space for people and their stuff
- Powertrain: 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine good for 187 horsepower; mated to 8-speed automatic transmission
- How's the performance? Smooth and comfortable highway ride, lackadaisical 0-60 mph at 9.3 seconds. Peppier turbocharged engines available with hybrid and plug-in versions.

MOTORMOUTH: Getting amped up over voltage

By BOB WEBER
Chicago Tribune

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest*. Send questions along with name and town to Motormouth, Rides, Chicago Tribune, 160 N. Stetson Ave., Fourth Floor, Chicago, IL 60601 or motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.*

Q: I have a 2016 3.6-liter Cadillac with 18,000 miles. Lately, I've noticed that the voltage starts out at around 13-plus volts and works its way up to a little over 15 volts. It will lower a bit at stop lights. I'm experiencing no problems, but this seems to be something to check out. The car comes with an AGM battery, and I verified the dash reading matched my voltmeter. Older GM cars had a voltage regulator in the alternator, but I'm reading that some cars have the ECM control voltage. I don't want to start throwing new parts at it before I find what's causing this.

A: Historically, alternator output has topped out around 14.7 volts. That was before computer systems, which now maintain a close watch on power demand. It is normal for output to vary and to go as high as 15 volts to keep the battery at optimum levels. AGM (absorbed glass mat) batteries often need a bit more charging oomph than typical lead-acid batteries with plates. Save your money. You may need it due to inflation.

Q: I have a 2011 Dodge Charger R/T with AWD and 51,000 miles. I love this car and maintain it well. A couple of times recently during our snowy winter, I noticed that if the ABS kicks in at a stop, the brakes feel "squishy" for several minutes after that. I asked my mechanic recently to check it out. He could not reproduce the problem (of course!) and inspected my brakes, saying all looked OK. Any ideas or suggestions?

A: If the anti-lock brake system (ABS) activates when coming to a stop, it is often a problem with one or more of the wheel speed sensors. The brake pedal may feel soft and may travel a bit farther than normal but returns to normal after a few applications. Since you only drive about 5,000 miles a year, rust may have built up between the wheel speed sensor and the pickup disturbing the signal. But don't rule out the possibility that ice on the road surface could be the culprit in cold weather.

Q: We recently purchased a used 2017 Jeep Cherokee for our daughter. Jeep has a system called Uconnect and Sirius/XM guardian. We called Uconnect to register her car and set up both systems. We were told that they no longer provide service to 2017 Jeeps because they are 3G and now service is provided only to vehicles with 4G or 5G. We talked to the dealership where we bought the car. They found basically the same information we did. Everything on the radio system can be used except she cannot upload her own apps from her phone, she is unable to use nav, and we cannot get the phone app, nor can we get the Sirius/XM guardian for protection like OnStar. As it stands now the only thing we can think of is to replace the entire system with a CarPlay system.

A: Cassette tapes replaced vinyl records. CDs replaced cassettes. Thumb drives replaced CDs and internet services are replacing…. Second and third generation (2G and 3G) telephone service is no longer supported and, I believe, 3G from the last holdout (T-Mobile) won't be supported after July 1, 2022. Yeah, it stinks. I even have a Sony Walkman that isn't worth using as a paperweight. As for installing CarPlay, I must defer to an infotainment expert.

Life & Style

Dre, Snoop and friends deliver epic show

INGLEWOOD, Calif. (AP)—Dr. Dre & Co. took the weight of the hip-hop culture on the Super Bowl stage, shouldered the pressure from skeptics and delivered a strong halftime show to prove that edgy rap can work at the world's biggest sporting events.

All it took was hip-hop's most controversial figures—and one knee taken by music's most prominent white rapper.

Dre, Snoop Dogg, Mary J. Blige, Eminem and Kendrick Lamar were headliners along with 50 Cent as a special guest at the Super Bowl halftime show on Sunday. Their collective performance is one of the best since Beyoncé and Bruno Mars' halftime set in 2016.

Each performer offered their own element: Dre, Snoop Dogg and Lamar brought their West Coast flavor. Blige—known as the "Queen of Hip-Hop Soul"—sang and danced her heart out. 50 Cent hit the musical rewind button with "In Da Club."

When Eminem's turn came, he performed a couple of his hits starting with "Forgot About Dre" with Anderson .Paak playing the drums. But he seemingly defied the NFL by kneeling after performing "One Shot."

Eminem stayed down on one knee for a moment while Dre sat in front of a piano and played Tupac's "I Ain't Mad at Cha."

Dre, a prolific producer, kicked off the performance standing behind a sound table on top of a makeshift white house. He introduced Snoop Dogg—wearing a blue bandana outfit—who performed a few classics such as "The Next Episode" and "California Love."

Afterward, Snoop Dogg yelled out "West Coast make some noise." The rapper's statement showed their unabashedly attempt to deliver a remarkable view of Southern California music—especially the lowrider cars posted on stage.

Like in his "In Da Club" music video, 50 Cent began his set upside downside wearing a white tank top.

Blige appeared on a rooftop with a slew of dancers jamming to her classic melodies "Family Affair" then performed "No More Pain." Her set seamlessly went to the black suit-wearing Lamar who was joined by other Black men sporting same outfits as him.

After Eminem's performance, all six joined together as Dre rapped "Still Dre." Their closing act had an array of dancers dressed in khaki outfits.

AP

From left, Eminem performs with Kendrick Lamar, Dr. Dre, Mary J. Blige, and Snoop Dogg during halftime of the NFL Super Bowl 56 football game between the Los Angeles Rams and the Cincinnati Bengals Sunday, Feb. 13, 2022, in Inglewood, Calif.

'Death on the Nile' tops a quiet box office weekend

NEW YORK (AP)—Hollywood's Super Bowl weekend largely fizzled with the muted debut of Kenneth Branagh's long-delayed Agatha Christie whodunit, "Death on the Nile," a tepid reception for the Jennifer Lopez romantic-comedy "Marry Me" and modest box-office bumps for Oscar nominees.

"Death on the Nile," Branagh's follow-up to the 2017 hit "Murder on the Orient Express," led all films with $12.8 million in ticket sales, according to studio estimates Sunday. Produced under 20th Century Fox before its acquisition by the Walt Disney Co., "Death on the Nile" had been delayed by the pandemic and by scandal that engulfed one of its stars, Armie Hammer.

Last March, Hammer was put under investigation by Los Angeles police in a sexual assault. Hammer has denied the allegation.

After considering other avenues, reportedly including reshooting parts of the film without Hammer, Disney opted to release "Death on the Nile" as it was—albeit with less fanfare on a weekend the film industry often yields to football. The $90 million film, which also stars Gal Gadot, Emma McKay and Branagh, reprising his role as detective Hercule Poirot, had once seemed a reliable money-maker. "Murder on the Orient Express" launched with $28.7 million in 2017 and ended up grossing $352.8 million worldwide against a $55 million budget. "Death on the Nile" added $20.7 million in international receipts.

Hollywood's biggest pitch to moviegoers over the weekend wasn't in theaters but in television ads. After two years of the pandemic, a heavy-hitting lineup of blockbusters were set to roll out trailers during the Super Bowl broadcast and try to lure still-reluctant moviegoers back to theaters. Last year, when many theaters were still shuttered and few films were being released, Hollywood largely sat out the game. Jordan Peele's "Nope" kicked off the day with its first trailer early Sunday.

"Marry Me" opened with $8 million while simultaneously streaming on Peacock. The Universal Pictures release, which was timed to Valentine's Day on Monday, stars Lopez as a pop star who, after finding out her fiancé has been cheating, marries a stranger (Owen Wilson) at one of her concerts. In recent years, streaming platforms have increasingly been the rom-com's primary home. Netflix, in particular, has pumped out a constant stream of new entries in the genre. On Friday, Amazon Prime Video debuted its own: "I Want You Back," with Charlie Day and Jenny Slate.

The lukewarm performance of "Marry Me" allowed last week's top film, "Jackass Forever," to narrowly edge it for second place. Johnny Knoxville's sequel dropped a steep 65% from last weekend, coming in with an estimated $8.1 million for Paramount Pictures. Its grossed $37.4 million in total.

Ivan Reitman, 'Ghostbusters' director, dies at 75

By LINDSEY BAHR
AP FILM WRITER

Ivan Reitman, the influential filmmaker and producer behind many of the most beloved comedies of the late 20th century, from "Animal House" to "Ghostbusters," has died. He was 75.

Reitman

Reitman died peacefully in his sleep Saturday night at his home in Montecito, Calif., his family told The Associated Press.

"Our family is grieving the unexpected loss of a husband, father, and grandfather who taught us to always seek the magic in life," children Jason Reitman, Catherine Reitman and Caroline Reitman said in a joint statement. "We take comfort that his work as a filmmaker brought laughter and happiness to countless others around the world. While we mourn privately, we hope those who knew him through his films will remember him always."

Known for bawdy comedies that caught the spirit of their time, Reitman's big break came with the raucous, college fraternity sendup "National Lampoon's Animal House," which he produced. He directed Bill Murray in his first starring role in the summer camp flick "Meatballs," and then again in 1981's "Stripes," but his most significant success came with 1984's "Ghostbusters."

Woman anxious to avoid making the same mistakes

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend, "Aaron," and I have been together almost 10 years. We are both divorced from narcissistic spouses. We have discussed a future together and are working toward it. It's taking so long because Aaron's children are quite a bit younger than mine. (I'm an empty nester; his kids are just going into their teens.) I am also working on getting my career established.

We get along well and seem compatible in every way, but one thing bothers me: Aaron can be passive-aggressive. It isn't often and it generally isn't just over petty stuff, but when it happens it is very hurtful.

I've been going to counseling to resolve some issues from my childhood and first marriage, and recently realized I have some toxic traits I need to work on and heal. Unfortunately, some of that toxicity has spilled into my relationship with Aaron and hurt him. When it happens, he reacts passive-aggressively for a bit, then things seem to go back to normal.

What can I do to get over the hurt I feel when he acts this way? I don't want to repay hurt for hurt. I want to break the cycle.

HEALING IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR HEALING: If your "toxicity" is what causes Aaron to react with what you interpret as passive-aggression, he could simply be nursing his wounds. Talk with your therapist about including Aaron in some of your sessions. If the therapist agrees, tell Aaron you think your relationship could be improved if he's willing to go with you. If the therapist does NOT agree to the "joint" sessions, it might be worth your while to discuss couples counseling with another therapist.

***

DEAR ABBY: I've been seeing a married man for more than 30 years. Everything was fine between us until recently. I have begun to suspect one of my female neighbors is seeing him as well. I'm contemplating getting in touch with his wife and my neighbor's husband and telling them about my suspicions.

I need to know what to do so this relationship with the neighbor will stop. I know by telling on him, I'll lose him, but if the neighbor is after him because of his money, I don't want his wife thinking I'm the one taking it from him. What should I do?

NERVOUS IN TEXAS

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

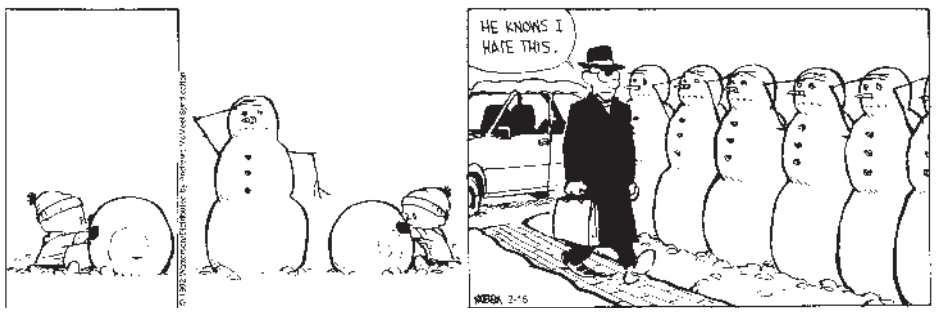
DEAR NERVOUS: Despite the odds, you have been fortunate in having had a drama-free affair for 30 years. Because you have no proof that your lover is involved with someone else, it would cause less damage to everyone if you shared your suspicions with HIM. I guarantee that if you reveal your three-decade affair to his wife, you can kiss this romance goodbye. If the neighbor couple finds out you accused her, you will make enemies—particularly if your suspicions are not true.

I find it ironic that after helping your lover cheat for decades, you are now angry at him for cheating. I see nothing to be gained by creating a scandal to save your injured pride.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis

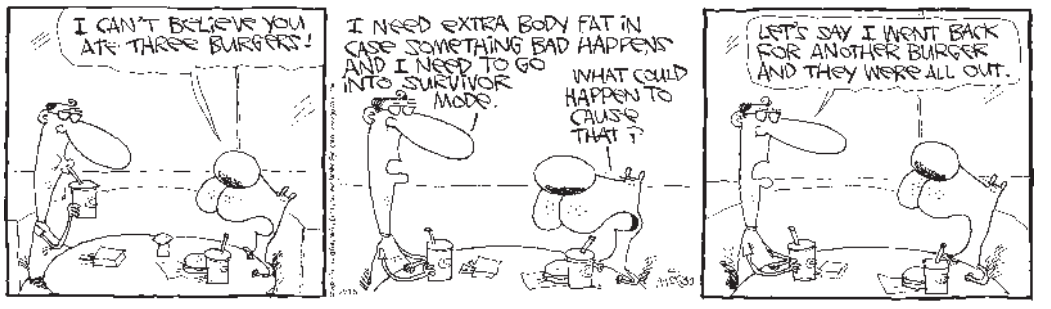
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

HOW'RE YOU DOING?
HUH?
THE WORLD'S BEEN WEIRD FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS. YOU OKAY?
I MEAN, I GUESS I'M FINE. I THINK?
I GUESS WE'LL SEE WHEN YOU GET OLDER.
OH. I'M KEEPING NOTES FOR MY FUTURE THERAPISTS.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU ATE THREE BURGERS!
I NEED EXTRA BODY FAT IN CASE SOMETHING BAD HAPPENS AND I NEED TO GO INTO SURVIVOR MODE.
WHAT COULD HAPPEN TO CAUSE THAT?
LET'S SAY I WENT BACK FOR ANOTHER BURGER AND THEY WERE ALL OUT.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

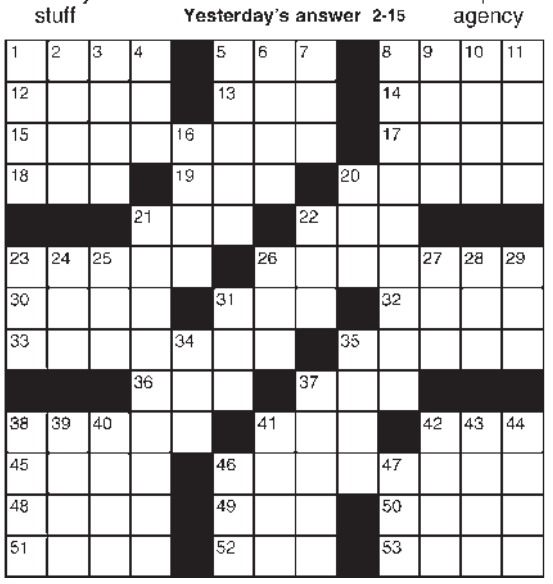
ACROSS
1 Erstwhile acorns
5 Moment
8 Chart toppers
12 You love (Lat.)
13 Bill's partner
14 Shrek, for one
15 TV drama starring Claire Danes
17 Bump into
18 Olympics chant
19 Mornings (Abbr.)
20 Job benefits
21 Trendy
22 Narc's org.
23 Thespian
26 Biblical cover-up?
30 Campus digs
31 Custard ingredient
32 Oklahoma tribe
33 Crush
35 Plumber's tool
36 Sticky stuff
37 Hearty brew
38 June birthstone
41 Buddy
42 QBs' goals
45 Missile shelter
46 Out of danger
48 Winter blanket
49 Year in Madrid
50 — Raton
51 Adolescent
52 Aachen article
53 "American —"

DOWN
1 Diamond Head locale
2 Novelist Oz
3 — Sutra
4 Compass dir.
5 Rascal
6 Eternities
7 Massachusetts cape
8 Classic Culkin comedy
9 Media exec Robert
10 Arduous journey
11 Tennis match parts
16 Hideaway
20 Cribbage scorer
21 Like garden veggies
22 Use a shovel
23 TV spots
24 — au vin
25 Capote nickname
26 E-I connection
27 JFK info
28 Fine, at NASA
29 Service charge
31 Author Umberto
34 Texter's chuckle
35 — gin fizz
37 Knight wear
38 "Hey, you!"
39 Bonn article
40 Lotion ingredient
41 Dog biscuit shape
42 Walked (on)
43 Erte's style
44 Barking critter
46 Possessed
47 Justice Dept. agency

Solution time: 22 mins.

C	R	O			G	O	T		A	G	E	T
R	O	I	L		N	U	B		L	E	T	S
	A	G	O		J	Z	I		L	E	F	K
B	R	A	V	O		O	R	F	O			
			E	R	R		D	O	J	B	T	S
L	I	T	H	G	O	W		S	T	O	R	E
A	R	E	A		O	E	R		O	W	E	N
C	A	R	N	E		B	A	F	F	L	E	D
E	N	I	G	M	A		D	A	L			
			C	O	Z	E		D	O	Z	E	D
L	I	E	V		J	R	B		V	E	R	Y
	S	L	E		R	O	B		E	R	I	E
P	O	O	R		E	S	C		O	N	S	

Yesterday's answer 2-15



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Amber Riley, 36; Matt Groening, 68; Melissa Manchester, 71; Jane Seymour, 71.

Happy Birthday: Take the edge off and lighten up, and you'll accomplish so much more than you originally plan. Pat yourself on the back, and look for the good in everyone and everything. A positive attitude makes for a better environment and choices as you take on new and exciting challenges. Live in the moment and embrace the future with optimism. Your numbers are 9, 17, 20, 27, 31, 36, 45.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Trust in your ability to get things done. Don't wait for someone to finish what you start. Take care of responsibilities, and feel good about what you accomplish. Refuse to let someone's negativity slow you down. Reward your efforts; do something entertaining. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Refuse to let what others decide to do limit you. Follow through with your plans, and don't worry about any complaints you encounter. You must satisfy yourself instead of bending over backward trying to please others. Live life your way. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Put more effort into your surroundings, comfort and convenience. Making your life more leisurely will help you be productive and give you more time to enjoy downtime with favored people. Good timing coupled with discipline and hard work will lead to praise. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Educate yourself, and implement what you learn into your everyday life. The changes you make will fortify your plans and help you succeed. The more energy you put behind your dreams, the easier it will be to get others to contribute. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Accept, adapt and carry on with your day. A steadfast approach to accomplishing something will ensure you reach your mark. Choose your words carefully when others ask for support. Promising too much will put a dent in how much you achieve. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Go someplace that stimulates your mind, body and soul. A hike, museum, art gallery or sports event will motivate you to do things differently and explore. What you experience today will promote personal growth. Romance is favored. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* If you like someone or enjoy doing something, carry on and don't stop until you've had your fill. Refuse to let a lack of motivation stand between you and doing something that will enrich your life. Concentrate on achievement and rewards. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Don't show emotion when dealing with professional situations. Do what others expect of you, but give whatever you do a unique twist. Take on projects that require ingenuity, and present ideas that favor the outcome you want to achieve. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Take better care of your health and financial matters. Don't spend unnecessarily; being overly generous or careless will result in loss. Someone will take advantage of you if you aren't careful. Don't share with strangers or get involved in a joint venture. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* You'll face opposition today, but don't let that stop you. Take a different approach and offer something that will make it easier for others to accept and support what you want to pursue. Use finesse to get your way. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Settle any differences peacefully. Be ready to compromise to ensure fair play is maintained. Keep your emotions under control, and let your intellect help you navigate your way to victory. Thoughtful planning and precise execution are your tickets to success. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* If you second-guess yourself, you'll fall short. Own whatever you decide to do, and follow through with precision and gusto. A take-charge attitude will help you gain respect and get things done with plenty of time to spare for relaxation. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are reserved, patient and wise. You are changeable and protective.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

1			2			3		
3		7	9				8	
					3			
9						4	7	
2	3			8			5	9
	4	8						6
			8					
	1				6	5		4
		4			5			7

Difficulty Level ★★ 2/15

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

2	7	5	4	3	6	1	8	9
9	3	8	7	5	1	6	4	2
1	4	6	2	8	9	3	7	5
6	5	9	8	1	7	4	2	3
7	2	4	9	6	3	5	1	8
3	8	1	5	4	2	7	9	6
8	1	7	3	9	5	2	6	4
4	6	3	1	2	8	9	5	7
5	9	2	6	7	4	8	3	1

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

THE VASARI CORRIDOR Solution: 11 letters

P	R	E	N	O	V	A	T	I	O	N	S	S	O	B
D	U	K	E	C	O	S	I	M	O	I	X	T	E	O
A	F	U	V	E	C	C	H	I	O	I	O	C	T	B
E	F	D	S	L	L	A	W	N	O	Z	C	R	E	O
H	I	D	E	E	W	I	R	R	Z	A	I	E	C	L
R	Z	N	C	K	G	A	C	A	F	P	T	W	N	I
E	I	A	R	L	R	A	L	U	P	J	Y	O	A	G
V	G	R	E	S	L	A	M	K	R	O	W	T	R	A
O	A	G	T	E	P	I	M	A	I	I	N	A	T	R
B	L	L	D	O	D	O	T	N	D	N	V	T	N	D
S	L	R	E	S	U	O	H	S	U	A	G	E	E	E
E	E	O	S	W	O	R	O	S	W	E	I	V	R	N
R	R	U	A	T	I	N	I	R	T	A	T	N	A	S
V	Y	T	R	U	B	E	N	S	A	F	E	T	Y	C
E	L	E	V	A	T	E	D	E	M	U	S	E	U	M

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Arno, Artwork, Beccafumi, Boboli Gardens, Boss, City, Damage, Delacroix, Door, Duke Cosimo, Elevated, Entrance, Grand Duke, House, Join, Museum, Observe, Overhead, Palazzo, Ponte, Renovations, River, Route, Rows, Rubens, Safety, Santa Trinita, Secret, Shops, Still, Tourism, Tower, Uffizi Gallery, Unmarked, Vecchio, Views, Walking, Walls

Yesterday's Answer: Menu

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 50, 51 and 53 through 66, order on line at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Tatum scores 38, Celtics rally past Hawks for 8th win in row

BOSTON (AP)— Jayson Tatum scored 38 points and led a third-quarter surge that sent the Boston Celtics past the Atlanta Hawks 105-95 Sunday for their eighth straight win.

Tatum also had 10 rebounds. Robert Williams added 10 points and 14 boards, Jaylen Brown scored 17 points and Marcus Smart had 13.

"We're just cooking right now," said Tatum, who had 16 points in the third as the Celtics outscored the Hawks 42-23 in the period.

Trae Young had 30 points and 10 assists to lead Atlanta, keeping the Hawks within range until the final few minutes of the fourth quarter. Bogdan Bogdanovic finished with 26 points and Clint Capela pulled down 17 rebounds for the Hawks, who lost for the fourth time in five games.

Atlanta held a 10-point lead at halftime but unraveled quickly in the third quarter.

"I thought in the third quarter, we got distracted by the officiating. They got into the penalty early and they had a 42-point quarter," Atlanta coach Nate McMillan said. "I thought that was the difference in the game. We just were not able to recover from that."

The Celtics, who lost their first two against the Hawks this season, trailed 55-45 at halftime and allowed an early basket by Young to start the third.

Boston responded with a 12-0 run and dominated the rest of the period. The Celtics made 13 of 18 shots in the third. Tatum hit a pair of 3-pointers late in the period and adding a dunk with three seconds remaining to put the Celtics up 87-78.

Tatum wasn't done. After the Hawks pulled within 89-84, Tatum hit a turnaround jumper, then another 3-pointer to stretch the lead back to 94-84 with 6:32 left and prompted the Hawks to call a timeout.

AP

Boston Celtics' Jayson Tatum goes to shoot against Atlanta Hawks' Onyeka Okongwu (17) and De'Andre Hunter during the first quarter of an NBA basketball game Sunday, Feb. 13, 2022, in Boston.

The break didn't slow down Boston, which forced a miss by Young under the basket and got another 3-pointer by Grant Williams from in front of the Atlanta bench. The Celtics were able to hold a wide lead the rest of the way.

Although the Hawks held Boston to only 18 points in the fourth, Atlanta scored just 17 in the final period.

"We played really good defense until that third quarter," Young said. "We've just got to stay solid throughout the four quarters and we've got to do a little bit better offensively, especially down the stretch."

The Celtics' streak is by far the longest under first-year coach Ime Udoka, whose patience was tested a few times during the early months of the season.

Brown said the team's chemistry has been fine all along and it's the Celtics' overall play that has improved.

"We definitely lost some games we felt like we shouldn't have lost early in the season. Now we get the chance to play some of these teams again and we're looking to pull out some wins," Brown said. "We had a lot of guys making plays right now and that's what we need to do in the fourth quarter. We've been finding ways to win — defensively, timely baskets and we've been sealing out games."

Timberwolves 129, Pacers 120

In Indianapolis, Anthony Edwards celebrated a milestone Sunday by scoring 37 points and leading the Minnesota Timberwolves to a 129-120 victory over the Indiana Pacers.

Edwards became the fourth-youngest player in NBA history to reach the 2,500-point mark when he made his first basket of the game. The second-year forward is 20 years, 192 days old. LeBron James, Kevin Durant and Devin Booker are the only younger players to achieve the feat.

The Timberwolves snapped a two-game losing streak overall and a three-game losing streak at Indiana as they compete to finish among the top six in the Western Conference and avoid the play-in round.

Edwards made seven 3-pointers and had five rebounds, four assists and four steals on a day Karl Anthony-Towns was in foul trouble.

"When he's playing that well, we're a tough team," guard Patrick Beverley said, referring to Edwards. "I love the way he played tonight, put the pressure on them all night. He's hard to guard and it can be anybody's night."

Oshae Brissett had a season-high 22 points and matched his career high with 13 rebounds for Indiana, which has lost six in a row.. Tyrese Haliburton added 22 points and 16 assists, one short of tying his career high in just his second game with the Pacers.

The difference was Minnesota's size and depth.

"Against a team that had all their guys and is playing very well and is very talented we did some good things to hang around and give ourselves a chance in the fourth," Pacers coach Rick Carlisle said. "There's some very positive things and some things that obviously need work. We're just running low on bodies now."

Indiana opened with a quick scoring flurry, but the Timberwolves cut the deficit to 37-33 at the end of one quarter then took charge in the second. Malik Beasley's 3-pointer gave the Timberwolves the lead and spurred a 13-0 run that allowed the Timberwolves to build a 56-44 lead.

They extended the margin to 18 early in the second half — before the Pacers finally charged back. Indiana closed to 96-94 in the final minute of the third quarter and made it a two-point game again when Terry Taylor opened the fourth by making two free throws. But Minnesota answered with an 8-2 run.

NBA BRIEFS

Bucks' Connaughton to undergo surgery for hand injury

MILWAUKEE (AP)—The Milwaukee Bucks are optimistic that guard Pat Connaughton will return before the end of the regular season as he prepares to undergo surgery on his broken right hand.

Connaughton suffered the injury Thursday while fouling Chris Paul on a drive to the basket late in the third quarter of a 131-107 loss at Phoenix. The Bucks later confirmed he had a fourth metacarpal fracture on his right hand.

Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said Sunday that Connaughton would be undergoing surgery. Budenholzer also expressed confidence that Connaughton will be available before the end of the regular season.

Connaughton, 29, is scoring a career-high 10.1 points per game this season. The 6-foot-5 guard also is averaging 4.4 rebounds, 1.2 assists and 27 minutes.

The injury to Connaughton and the trade of Donte DiVincenzo hinders the Bucks' backcourt depth. The Bucks dealt DiVincenzo to the Sacramento Kings on Thursday as part of a four-team trade in which they acquired veteran center Serge Ibaka from the Los Angeles Clippers.

Clippers' Norman Powell out indefinitely with foot injury

LOS ANGELES (AP)— Newly acquired Norman Powell is out indefinitely for the Los Angeles Clippers with a broken bone in his left foot.

The team said Sunday that he fractured the medial sesamoid bone in his foot in Thursday's loss at Dallas and no surgery is planned at this time.

Powell joins injured All-Stars Kawhi Leonard and Paul George on the sidelines. Leonard has yet to play this season while recovering from offseason surgery on a torn ACL and George hurt his right elbow in December. Leonard and George attended Sunday's Super Bowl in Inglewood together.

Powell got hurt in his third game with the team when Maxi Kleber stepped on his foot.

Durant begins on court workouts, looks to return after All-Star break

MIAMI (AP)—Kevin Durant has taken a significant first step in hopes of rejoining the Brooklyn Nets after hurting his left knee three weeks ago.

The former league MVP, who sprained his left MCL in a game against the New Orleans Pelicans on Jan. 15, recently began light court workouts. Durant also traveled with the club to its game against the Miami Heat on Saturday night.

"It's getting better every day," Durant said Saturday. "It's a process to get back on the court and I'm going through that every day. I feel better as each week passes. It's slow but I'm looking forward to ramping things up."

Considered a favorite to win the Eastern Conference, the Nets have lost 11 straight after falling to the Heat on Saturday. Brooklyn is 2-12 since Durant was sidelined.

"A lot of teams have talent and winning a championship is obviously the goal," Durant said. "But there are proper steps we have to go through to get there. And things have been on pause for a bit. I know the losses have hurt us and I know my injury has hurt the team not being around."

Durant spoke two days after the Nets traded former MVP James Harden to Philadelphia for Ben Simmons, Seth Curry, Andre Drummond and draft picks. Reports that Harden wanted out of Brooklyn intensified for days until the trade was completed Thursday.

"James doesn't have to explain anything to anybody, he's his own man," Durant said when asked if his now former teammate reached out to him before the trade. "He makes decisions about his career by himself. He doesn't owe anybody an explanation.

"I'm just glad we got this thing done and that we're able to move forward from the noise."

The highly anticipated Nets lineup of Durant, Harden and Kyrie Irving appeared in only 16 games.

"I feel the basketball we played was a good brand of basketball while we were out on the floor," Durant said. "I can live with what we did."

Jackson 1st Black woman speedskating medalist

AP

Gold Medalist Erin Jackson of the United States reacts during a venue ceremony for the speedskating women's 500-meter race at the 2022 Winter Olympics, Sunday, Feb. 13, 2022, in Beijing.

By PAUL NEWBERRY
AP NATIONAL WRITER

BEIJING (AP)—Erin Jackson bolted off the line, her powerful legs attacking the ice, her destiny awaiting at the end of a frenetic dash around Beijing's magnificent speedskating oval.

She didn't view herself as some sort of trailblazer. She didn't think about the slip that could've snatched away her spot on the U.S. Olympic team. She simply wanted to go faster than everyone else.

"I came here to win," the 29-year-old said.

Mission accomplished.

Jackson became first Black woman to win a speedskating medal at the Olympics — and it was the best color of them all.

Gold.

"A lot of shock, a lot of relief and a lot of happiness," Jackson said after her victory in the 500 meters.

It was an immensely personal moment for an inline skating champion from balmy Ocala, Florida, who traded her wheels for blades in order to chase an improbable Olympic dream.

But it meant so much more than that.

Jackson's skin color makes her an anomaly at the speedskating oval. She joined fellow American Shani Davis as the only Black athletes to win long-track medals at the Olympics.

"I just hope that it will do something for the sport," Jackson said. "Hopefully, more people will see this and be like, 'Ohhh, maybe I should try some of these winter sports.'"

Academy Award-winning actress Viola Davis was among those lauding Jackson's groundbreaking victory.

"Congratulations @ErinJackson480!!" Davis wrote on Twitter. "You are a superior athlete!!"

Back in Florida, Jackson's longtime inline coach, Renee Hildebrand, cheered her on at an early-morning watch party thrown by one of her roller sport sponsors, Bont.

Hildebrand, too, hopes that Jackson's victory will bring some much-needed diversity to skating — no matter if it's wheels or blades.

"She's such a fantastic role model," Hildebrand said in a telephone interview. "Maybe little girls and little boys who are not all about roller skating or ice skating will see her and say, 'Hey, people my color are there. She looks like me.'"

The coach noted the impressive accomplishments of Davis, who won two golds and two silvers at the Olympics, and now Jackson.

"There's not a lot of African Americans in speedskating, but the ones who are have been are really, really good," Hildebrand said. "If others will come, they'll be good."

Jackson won with a time of 37.04 seconds, giving the American speedskating program its first medal of the Beijing Games, its first individual medal since 2010, and its first victory in the women's 500 since Bonnie Blair in 1994.

Jackson's gold came after she slipped at the U.S. trials and shockingly finished third, putting her spot on the Olympic team in jeopardy.

But teammate Brittany Bowe, another Ocala skater who finished first at the trials, gave up her spot in the 500 to ensure Jackson would get to compete in Beijing.

"She made a really big sacrifice for me," Jackson said. "I'll be grateful to her forever."

As it turned out, the Americans received a third slot in the 500 when the final allocations were made, so Bowe got to skate as well. She finished 16th.

The two close friends embraced after Jackson clinched the gold.

"She hugged me and we cried," the winner said. "She said she's really proud of me and I said a lot of thank-yous."

Jackson skated in the next-to-last of 15 pairs with the time of 37.12 — set about a half-hour earlier in the fourth pairing by Japan's Miho Takagi — in her sights.

She didn't think at all about that slip at the U.S. trials.

"It's not something to really focus on," Jackson said. "That was a fluke."

Jackson darted off the line and and essentially won the gold in the first 100 meters, before she negotiated the first turn. Her opening split was 10.33 seconds, compared to 10.41 for Takagi.

That was the margin at the end, too.

CAPS

From Page 20

he does."

Kupp caught four passes for 39 yards on the game-winning drive, converted a fourth-and-1 with a 7-yard run and drew three penalties near the goal line to set the stage for his game-winning catch. It was a fitting end to one of the greatest seasons and postseason runs ever for a wide receiver.

Kupp joined Jerry Rice (1990), Sterling Sharpe (1992) and Steve Smith (2005) as the only players since the merger to lead the NFL in receptions, yards receiving and receiving yards in the same season when he had 145 catches for 1,947 yards and 16 touchdowns to win the AP Offensive Player of the Year.

Kupp joined Joe Montana in 1989 as the only players to win Super Bowl MVP and AP Offensive Player of the Year in the same season.

The performance in the Super Bowl was just as good when he had eight catches for 92 yards and the two TDs to go along with his key run. About the only thing Kupp didn't do came when he missed Stafford on a pass on a trick play in the second half.

It's quite a ride for someone who played his college ball at lower-level Eastern Washington before coming into the NFL as a third-round pick in 2017. He made an instant impact as the Rams' reliable slot receiver. His injury midway through the 2018 season left him a spectator for the Rams' 13-3 loss to the New England Patriots in their previous Super Bowl trip.

Kupp did it all during this playoff run, setting an NFL record with 33 catches and trailing only Larry Fitzgerald's remarkable 2008 playoffs (30 catches for 546 yards and seven TDs) with his 478 yards and six TDs in four games.

While Fitzgerald's magical run ended in defeat after the Steelers rallied for the winning score following his go-ahead catch, the Rams defense made Kupp's catch stand up and he collapsed to the turf in joy before getting the MVP trophy as his reward.

KUPP'S

From Page 20

winning score.

Kupp had four receptions for 39 yards, and a 7-yard run on fourth-and-1 from the Rams 30 on the championship drive. Cincinnati was penalized the second-fewest times (72) for the fewest yards (620) in the regular season but flags on three consecutive plays hurt badly — including interference on Kupp in the end zone.

"I don't feel deserving of this," Kupp said. "The guys standing here challenged me, they pushed me. I am just so grateful."

Even with that brilliant, decisive march to the Lombardi Trophy, it was LA's "fearsome fivesome" that made the difference. Led by Aaron Donald and Von Miller, they sacked Joe Burrow a Super Bowl record-tying seven times, shutting down Cincinnati's offense after the Bengals took the lead and then added to it with a field goal during a 22-second spurt to start the second half.

Fittingly, Burrow was under pressure on fourth-and-1 and threw incomplete, setting off a football fiesta this city has not seen since the LA Raiders won the 1983 championship.

A tearful Donald said after the crowning achievement of a certain Hall of Fame career, "I wanted it so bad. I dreamed this."

Added McVay, at 36 the youngest Super Bowl-winning head coach: "For the offense to be able to find a way, and then Aaron to be able to finish it off, it's poetic, man."

The 10 quick points at the outset of the third quarter put Cincinnati ahead for the first time. Tee Higgins' 75-yard score made it 17-13 and was followed one play later by Chidobe Awuzie's pick. Evan McPherson tied Adam Vinatieri's postseason record with his 14th field goal, a 38-yarder.

Higgins beat All-Pro cornerback Jalen Ramsey on the first play of the second half—the receiver clearly tugged Ramsey's face mask on the play. After Stafford was intercepted on the next play, the Bengals got McPherson's field goal.

Then they tried to hold on as all of southwest Ohio held its breath.

But LA's relentless pass rush, led by its two biggest stars, Donald and Miller with two apiece, allowed nothing more.

Then came the 15-play march in which Kupp also converted the fourth down with his run.

"We wanted to be in attack mode and pressure them as much as possible," Bengals coach Zac Taylor said. "Sometimes it worked, sometimes it didn't."

Kupp even earned the MVP honor despite often being double-teamed after fellow wideout Odell Beckham Jr. — who had a touchdown catch on Los Angeles' second drive for the game's first score — went out with a knee injury in the second period. Kupp finished with eight receptions for 92 yards.

One fear for Rams followers was ill-advised throws by Stafford, and he had two. His deep pass moving left was picked in the end zone late in the first half by Jessie Bates III. On his second interception, rookie Ben Skowronek could only deflect it -- directly to Awuzie.

Other than Matt Gay's 41-yard field goal later in the third quarter, it was all defense until the Rams' relentless drive to win it.

Energized from the outset, the crowd of 70,048 at the stadium that opened in 2020 roared to introductions of each team by The Rock. Then the Bengals fans, far louder than their Rams counterparts early on, got to rocking when Trey Hendrickson sacked Stafford, leading to a punt.

LA's defense responded by holding on third and fourth downs with a yard to go at midfield. Ernest Jones knocked down a pass for Ja'Marr Chase to turn over the ball, and the excellent field position set up the first touchdown.

Beckham, who joined the Rams in Week 10 after being exiled from Cleveland, easily beat Mike Hilton on a corner pattern for the 17-yard score on third down. Then Beckham showed off his moonwalk in the end zone.

Kupp's first touch, also on third down, was a short throw from Stafford he turned into a 20-yard gain when Jessie Bates III fanned on a tackle. That would not be the last whiff by the Bengals, and it cost them mightily at the end.

3 PENALTIES

From Page 20

ing call on Bengals linebacker Logan Wilson gave the Rams a first down at the 4.

On the next play, Stafford tossed a 4-yard TD pass to Kupp but the play was nullified by offsetting penalties. Rams right tackle Rob Havenstein held and Bengals safety Vonn Bell was called for unnecessary roughness for a hard hit on Kupp.

Stafford threw incomplete to Kupp in the end zone on the next play, but a pass interference on Eli Apple put the ball at the 1.

After Stafford got stuffed on a sneak, he tossed a 1-yard TD pass to Kupp.

Joe Burrow had 1:25 to lead Cincinnati into field-goal range, but the Bengals failed on three attempts to get 1 yard from the Rams 49.

For most of the game, the officials let the teams play.

They even missed a penalty that would've negated Burrow's 75-yard TD pass to Tee Higgins on the first play of the second half. Higgins beat Jalen Ramsey to give the Bengals a 17-13 lead, but he got away with grabbing the All-Pro cornerback's facemask and spinning his head around before making the catch.

The turning point for Los Angeles came after falling behind 20-13. The Rams and their ferocious defensive line sacked Burrow four times over the next 11 plays.

Burrow went down seven times, six in the second half.

Aaron Donald and Von Miller each had two sacks.

Pangilinan, Guerrero hand NMI first title in Guam

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The tried-and-tested pair of Janelle Pangilinan and Nate Guerrero delivered the first championship for Team NMI in the 2022 Guam Badminton Invitational Tournament after topping the Open mixed doubles event in the weekend competition held at the Guam Badminton Sports Center in Barrigada.

The NMI duo secured the division title after sweeping Guam's C.J. Estipona and Elaine Labang, 21-19, 21-12. Before advancing to the finale, Pangilinan and Guerrero had to slip past fellow NMI National Badminton Team players Andreau Galvez and Windy Fernandez in a three-game semis tiff. Estipona and Labang, on the other hand, reached the finals after downing Jordan Pangilinan and Jeanelyn Cardinio, also from the NMI.

Four other teams were entered in the mixed doubles event with Guam's Sunardi Li partnering with Jenny Lue and John Conducto working with Mylene Gascon, NMI's Daniel Macario joining forces with Jenine Savellano, and Japanese Akira Hitomi pairing with compatriot Ai Okamura.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The NMI's Janelle Pangilinan, second left, and Nate Guerrero, third left, pose with Guam National Badminton Federation president Sandra Low, left, and other winners and participants in the 2022 Guam Badminton Invitational Tournament during the awards ceremony for the open mixed doubles event last Sunday at the Guam Badminton Sports Center in Barrigada.

Following their title win, Janelle Pangilinan said that although they prevailed after only two games, the finals match was very competitive and she and Guerrero credited their long-time partnership as a key factor to the victory.

"We have played in multiple tournaments together which allowed us to come this far. We were challenging Guam's No. 1 player in the men's which made the competition level high, but we survived due to putting together our skills and techniques. Winning this gave us an opportunity to know where we stand and what we should focus more on as we continue to prepare for the Pacific Mini Games," Pangilinan said.

"We had really tough opponents in our champion game—one of the players hadn't lost a set that whole tournament up until that point. However, I knew that if we played the way I know we could, then there wasn't any doubt in my mind that we would win that game. We had our moments just like they did in the game, but at the end of it all, it was our chemistry that helped us pull though. It was a great learning experience playing against them," Guerrero said.

Meanwhile, the NMI also had a finals entry in the open men's doubles with Jordan Pangilinan and Galvez making it to the championship game. The Commonwealth bets eliminated Hitomi and Rui Wang to gain a finals berth and set up their title showdown against Estipona and Conducto, who ousted Li and Ian Piencenaves in the other semis game. Estipona and Conducto went on to deny the NMI its second straight doubles title after outclassing Galvez and Pangilinan, 21-8, 21-15.

Besides the open mixed and men's doubles event, the Guam Badminton Invitational Tournament also featured competition in the C mixed doubles, women singles, and women's doubles, the open women's singles and doubles, and juniors singles and mixed doubles. Official results with complete scores will be reported once released by the organizing GNBF.

Super Bowl LVI watch parties on Saipan

KRIZEL TUAZON

The Super Bowl LVI watch party at the Hyatt Regency Saipan had around 90 football fans in attendance.

KRIZEL TUAZON

Pho Tam also hosted a Super Bowl LVI watch party with a small but vocal crowd..

KRIZEL TUAZON

The ever-popular Gridiron Magical Squares in the Super Bowl LVI watch party at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan's The Magellan.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The show must go on and so it did as a number of Saipan venues hosted their respective Super Bowl LVI watch parties.

Guests came in all shapes and sizes. Some showed up in full football paraphernalia, while others were just happy to kick back in enjoy the big game between the eventual Super Bowl champions Los Angeles Rams and the Cincinnati Bengals—a welcome respite in this stressful COVID-19 times.

Over at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan's The Magellan, about 40 gridiron fans showed up and partook of the lip-smacking breakfast and lunch buffet spread readied for them. Up to $900 in prizes were given away to the mostly Rams fans in the house.

At Hyatt Regency Saipan, the cavernous ballroom accommodated around 90 football diehards. Saipan's West Coast bias continued at the Garapan landmark as majority who watched the game were rooting for LA. Aside from enjoying the sumptuous breakfast and lunch buffets at the venue, MARPAC also gave away some $500 in raffle prizes.

Pho Tam Restaurant also hosted a Super Bowl watch party with the smallish crowd giving the larger venues a run for their money as far as the sound level was concerned. ***(With reports from Krizel Tuazon)***

Coach Hiro proud of former ward Aasish

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center head coach Hiroyuki Kimura congratulated his former swimmer, Aasish Dangol, for making it to the USA Junior Rankings recently.

He said Dangol started swimming when he was just 4 years old because his older sister, Ashley, was already swimming with Tsunami Saipan.

From early on, Dangol showed some signs of big things to come.

"Aasish progressed steadily. He went to the Guam Swimming Championships the first time when he was 7 years old. He won the championship in the boys 8-and-under division though he was still 7 years old," said Kmiura.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A young Aasish Dangol shares a light moment in 2019 at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan pool with Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center head coach Hiroyuki Kimura. The next day, the Dangols left for California.

Dangol then participated in Tokyo Junior Sprint for first time when he was 8 years old and amazingly won the gold medal of 50m butterfly.

A few months later, the swimming prodigy broke the CNMI age group record in the same event in the Saipan International Meet.

His development in the sport, however, came to a crashing halt a year later when the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi was closed.

"He lost his chance to break other CNMI record unfortunately because we could not hold swim meets here anymore," said Kimura.

Dangol continued to train sans an official pool and despite the handicap, he returned to the Tokyo Junior Sprint and took home the bronze medal of the 50m butterfly and 100m individual medley.

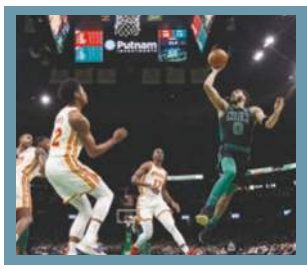
"When Aasish was 10, his family moved to the mainland in California. Before they left, I contacted Mr. Jesus Salcedo, head coach of Albany Armada Aquatics and told him that the Dangols are moving there and asked him to accept them in his swim club."

The siblings went on to swim for Salcedo's Albany Armada Aquatics and only worked harder, culminating in Aasish's USA Junior Rankings.

"Their wonderful performance has made me so proud of them. Ashley and Aasish promised me to keep swimming in the U.S. mainland before they left and they did just that. Of course, Aasish had big potential and he is a very hard worker. I'm such a lucky coach to have mentored them," said Kimura.

As previously reported, Aasish Dangol was previously ranked No. 8 in the 12-and-under age group before turning 13 a few months ago.

He received the ranking after he finished eighth in the SCY 400m individual medley of the 2021 PC AAA Intrasquad Distance Day with a time of 4:26:36.



Tatum scores 38, Celtics rally past Hawks for 8th win in row

PAGE 17

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Pangilinan, Guerrero hand NMI first title in Guam

PAGE 19

Kupp's late TD lifts Rams over Bengals

By BARRY WILNER
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

INGLEWOOD, Calif. (AP)—In a venue built for champions, the Los Angeles Rams carried off the crown jewel: a Super Bowl trophy.

It took a precise 79-yard drive capped by Cooper Kupp's 1-yard touchdown reception with 1:25 remaining for a 23-20 victory Sunday over the Cincinnati Bengals to give the Rams their first NFL title since the 1999 season—and their first representing Los Angeles since 1951.

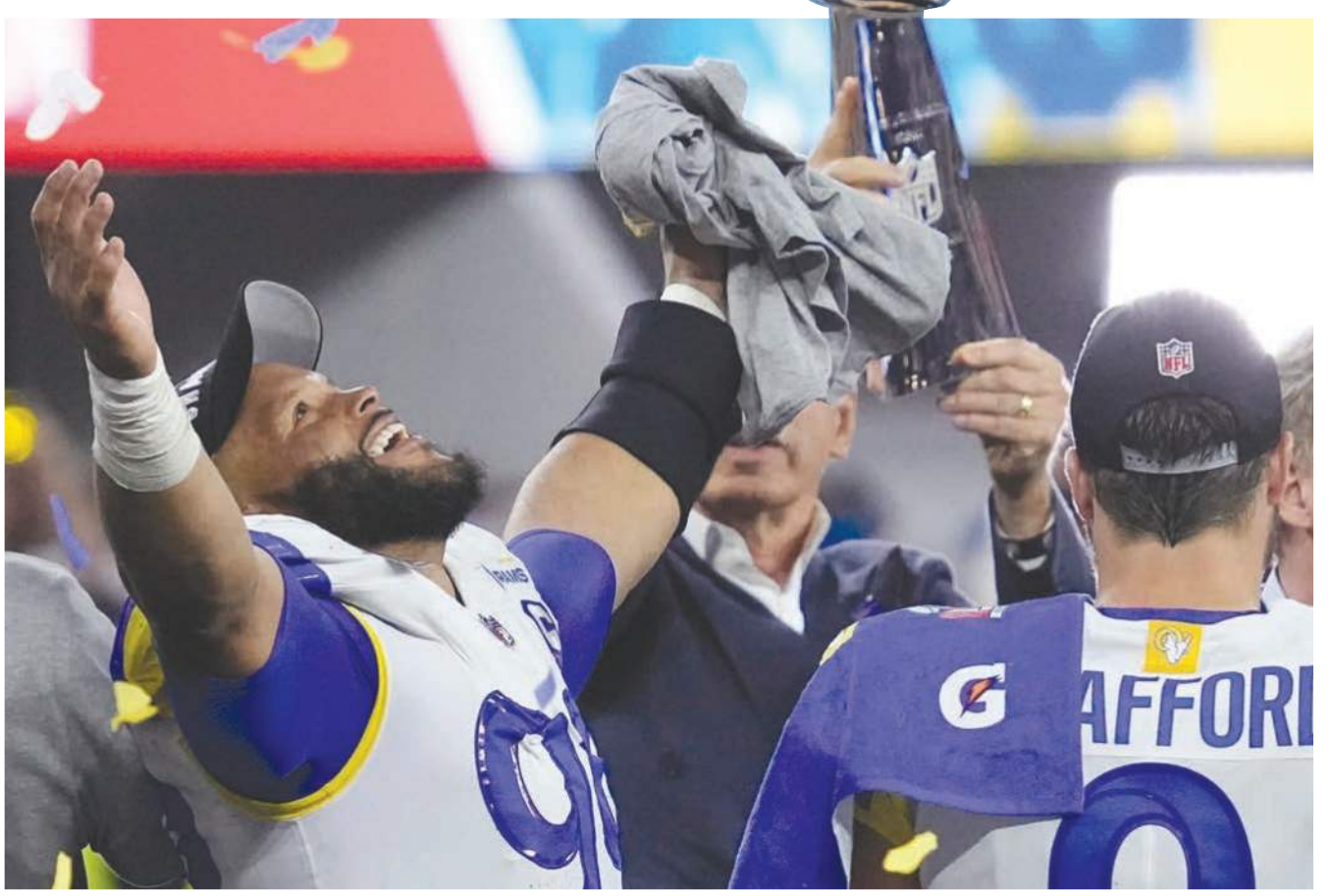
"Those guys just did a great job," coach Sean McVay said. "They took over that game."

They did so in their home, the $5 billion SoFi Stadium, making the Rams the second consecutive host to win the championship after Tampa Bay became the first a year ago.

"As far as building this stadium," said Rams owner Stan Kroenke, the man who moved them back from St. Louis in 2016, "I think it turned out all right."

The winning series, during which game MVP Kupp's 4-yard touchdown reception from Matthew Stafford was negated by offsetting penalties, ended soon after with the NFL Offensive Player of the Year easily beating Eli Apple in the right corner of the end zone for the

See KUPP'S on Page 18



AP

Los Angeles Rams defensive end Aaron Donald (99) after the NFL Super Bowl 56 football game Sunday, Feb. 13, 2022, in Inglewood, Calif. The Los Angeles Rams won 23-20.

Kupp caps triple crown season with Super Bowl MVP

AP

Los Angeles Rams wide receiver Cooper Kupp, top, catches a touchdown against Cincinnati Bengals cornerback Eli Apple during the second half of the NFL Super Bowl 56 football game Sunday, Feb. 13, 2022, in Inglewood, Calif.

By JOSH DUBOW
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

INGLEWOOD, Calif. (AP)—Cooper Kupp was helpless when the Los Angeles Rams went to the Super Bowl three years ago, only able to watch after tearing a knee ligament earlier in the season.

Kupp nearly did it all on the final drive of the Rams' return trip to the title game, capping off his Triple Crown receiving season in fitting fashion with a Super Bowl MVP award.

Kupp beat Eli Apple for the back-shoulder 1-yard touchdown catch with 1:25 remaining to give the Rams their first Super Bowl title ever in Los Angeles with a 23-20 victory over the Cincinnati Bengals on Sunday.

"I just don't feel deserving of this," Kupp said. "I'm just so thankful for the guys I get to be around, for the coaches, for my family. I just don't have words, I'm just so thankful for everyone, everyone that's been in my life and has encouraged me, has pushed me, has been there for me every step of the way."

The Rams put together the game-winning drive after barely being able to move the ball in their first seven drives after Kupp's running mate Odell Beckham Jr. went down with a knee injury. That allowed the Bengals to focus their coverage on Kupp and slow him down, but the Rams didn't care when the game was on the line.

"That's hard work, that's hours together," quarterback Matthew Stafford said. "I just thank Coach (Sean McVay) for putting it ... 'Hey, Matthew, you and Coop go get this thing done.' He kept calling plays for him, kept finding ways to get him the ball. He made unbelievable plays, that's what

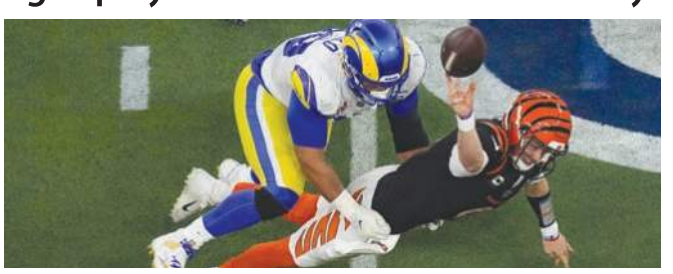
See CAPS on Page 18

3 penalties on 3 straight plays in final minutes cost Cincy

By ROB MAADDI
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

INGLEWOOD, Calif. (AP)—A sea of yellow flags flew onto the field in the final two minutes with the Super Bowl at stake.

After the Los Angeles Rams and Cincinnati Bengals were flagged only twice in the first 58 minutes, penalties on three consecutive plays helped determine a champion.



AP

Los Angeles Rams defensive end Aaron Donald (99) forces Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow (9) to throw an incomplete pass during the second half of the NFL Super Bowl 56 football game Sunday, Feb. 13, 2022, in Inglewood, Calif.

Matthew Stafford tossed a 1-yard touchdown pass to Cooper Kupp for the go-ahead score following three straight penalties on Cincinnati's defense, and the Rams' defense held on for a 23-20 victory Sunday.

The barrage of flags started on third down from the 8 with 1:47 left when Stafford's pass to Kupp was incomplete. However, a questionable hold-

See 3 PENALTIES on Page 18